THE KILTARTAN MOLIÈRE

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

Gods and Fighting Men
Cuchulain of Muirthemne
Poets and Dreamers
Seven Short Plays
The Kiltartan History Book
The White Cockade
The Image

THE KILTARTAN MOLIÈRE
THE MISER. THE DOCTOR IN SPITE OF HIMSELF. THE ROGUERIES OF SCAPIN. TRANSLATED BY LADY GREGORY

DUBLIN: MAUNSEL & COMPANY. LTD.
BOSTON: JOHN W. LUCE & COMPANY.

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THE MISER

ACT I.

SCENE: *A Room in Harpagon's House.*

Valere. What ails you and what is vexing you, Elise, and you having given me your word you would never break with me. Is it right for you to be fretting at the time I am so well content? Is it that you are sorry now for the good words you said to me? Are you drawing back from the promise I maybe hurried you into, with the strength of my asking and my love?

Elise. No, Valere, I cannot be sorry for that. I feel myself as if drawn along by some power that is very pleasing to me. I cannot wish things to be different from what they are. But to tell you the truth, everything is going so well that I must feel uneasy. I am afraid I care for you a little more than I should.

Valere. Ah, what is there for you to be afraid of in that?

Elise. Oh, I am afraid of a great many things—my father in a rage, my family scolding at me, everybody abusing me. And what I am most afraid of, Valere, is that you yourself will change. That is the way men are, when they know they have won your love they pay you back by not wanting it.

Valere. Ah, now you are misjudging me, thinking me to be the same as other men! Think any bad thing of me but that I can change. I love you too much to treat you that way, and my love will last through the whole of my lifetime.

Elise. Ah, Valere, that is the way they all talk! Every man is as loyal as another so far as words go. It is only when it comes to doing we see the difference.

Valere. Well if you can only judge us by what we do, wait till you see how I will never change, and don't be worrying yourself by expecting the worst that can happen. Don't make an end of me altogether, fixing these suspicions on me. Give me time to prove to you, by thousands and thousands of proofs, that I am in real earnest.

Elise. It is a pity one can be so easily talked over by any person one cares for. Yes, Valere, I don't think you could deceive me. I believe

you love me with a real true love, and that it will never change. I will never doubt you any more ! I will be afraid of nothing but the blame that is sure to fall upon me.

Valere. Why are you so uneasy about that ?

Elise. There would be nothing to be afraid of if everybody could see you with my own eyes. You yourself are the excuse for everything ! And heaven knows I must be grateful to you ! There is not a minute of the day I do not think of that terrible danger that threw us together ! Your wonderful goodness that led you to risk your own life to save me from drowning in the sea ! The care you took of me after that ! The devotion that led you to pass yourself off to my father as a servant that you might be near me ! All that is excuse enough for the promise I have given you. But maybe other people will not look at the matter in the same way.

Valere. The only thing deserves any return at all from you is my love ! Don't worry yourself so much about your father. The way he stints you, and his miserly ways, are an excuse for more than that. Don't be vexed with me for saying it. You know well there is no one at all could stand up for him. But if I can find my own people again, and I am sure to

find them, there will not be much trouble in bringing him round. I am looking for news of them, and if it doesn't come soon I will go looking for them myself.

Elise. Oh, Valere, don't stir from this place ! You have nothing to think of now but how to get round my father.

Valere. Oh, I am getting on very well with him. What a lot of lies I had to tell before I could get into his service ! What a humbug I have turned to be. But I am getting on well now, for I find that all I have to do is to agree to all he says, to praise his fooleries, and to make much of all he may do. There is no fear of overdoing it. I need not put on any disguise at all. The smarter a man of his sort thinks himself to be, the easier it is to give him plaster of Paris. There is nothing I couldn't make him swallow. Maybe it is not good for my own honesty, but what can we do ? I have to get round him for my own purpose. It is not the man that flatters should be blamed, but the man that asks to be flattered.

Elise. But why don't you try and get my brother to help you ?

Valere. I have enough to do managing one of them. It would be best for you yourself to manage your brother. He is fond of you,

and you will coax him to help us. Here he is coming. I will be off. Speak to him now, but don't tell him more than you think wise.

Elise. I don't know if I have courage enough to tell him. (*Valere goes out*).

Cleante (*coming in*). I am glad you are alone Elise. I want to have a talk with you, to tell you a secret.

Elise. Here I am ready to listen to you. What have you to tell ?

Cleante. A great many things all in one word. I have fallen in love.

Elise. In love !

Cleante. Just so. But before going on, I should say that I am dependent on my father, that a son should give in to his father, that we ought not to get into engagements without the consent of those we owe our life to ; that heaven has made them the masters of our wishes, and we should never make a promise without their consent. I am telling you all this that you may save yourself the trouble of telling it to me. So as I will not listen to anything of the kind you need not start making objections.

Elise. Have you engaged yourself to the girl you are in love with ?

Cleante. Not yet, but I am going to engage

myself, and you need not begin talking against it.

Elise. You must have a very strange opinion of me.

Cleante. No, but you not being in love yourself, you have no notion what it is. It is your good sense I am afraid of.

Elise. Oh, don't be talking of my good sense! There is no one it does not fail once in a lifetime. If I tell you the truth you will very likely think me even more of a fool than yourself!

Cleante. Not if your sweetheart is anything like mine!

Elise. Let us make a finish of your business first. Tell me who is she?

Cleante. A young girl who has been staying here this while back. Everyone that sees her falls in love with her. There is not her equal in the whole world. I was done for from the first minute I got a sight of her. Her name is Marian. She is in charge of a good old soul, who is nearly always laid up with something or other. You can't think how fond she is of that old woman. She looks after her, takes care of her, comforts her, with a kindness that would touch your heart. She has the most engaging ways! She is shining with goodness

and kindness and modesty, and —— Oh, I wish you had seen her!

Elise. I see a great deal in what you are telling me. It is enough anyhow to tell me that you care for her.

Cleante. I have found out that they are not well off, and that it is all they can do to pay their way. Just fancy what a joy it would be to be able to help the woman you love! And think what a trouble it is to me that I can do nothing at all for her because my father is a miser!

Elise. I understand how you must feel that.

Cleante. Oh, no one would believe what it is to me! Could anything be worse than the way he treats us! His stinginess, the bareness of our way of living! Where is the use of money if it only comes when you are too old to enjoy it? I have to run into debt on every side to keep myself going at all. We have both of us to coax the shopkeepers to let us have so much as clothes to put on. Well, what I am coming to is, I want you to sound our father, and if he will do nothing for me I have made up my mind to go away and to take Marian with me, and trust heaven for the rest. I am looking where I can borrow money to carry out this plan. If your case is anything like mine, you

had better run too, and say goodbye to him and his niggardly ways.

Elise. He makes us feel the loss of our mother more and more every day.

Cleante. I hear his voice! Come away till we talk it over. We must make our attack on him together bye and bye.

(*They go out. Harpagon and La Fleche come in.*)

Harpagon. Be off out of this on the minute, and don't be answering me! Get out I say! You good for nothing, you carrion!

La Fleche (*aside*). I never saw the like of him for wickedness! It is what I think, the devil is in his hide!

Harpagon. What's that you are mumbling?

La Fleche. For what cause are you dismissing me?

Harpagon. I like your impudence asking my reasons! Be off out of this or you'll get a clout on the head!

La Fleche. What at all did I do to you?

Harpagon. You did this, you have my mind made up to hunt you!

La Fleche. Your son, that is my master, bade me to wait here for him.

Harpagon. Go wait for him in the street so, and don't be stuck in my house, planted at

attention the same as a sentinel, to be taking notice of all that goes on, and to make your own profit. I will not have a spy put upon me to be sneaking into my business, squinting into all I do, devouring all I own and ferreting about on every side to see is there anything handy to rob.

La Fleche. How the mischief could any man rob you ? What way could you be robbed, and you locking up every earthly thing, and watching over it night and day ?

Harpagon. I will lock up what I think well to lock up, and I will watch it whatever way pleases myself. Aren't there enough of spies all around me taking notice of all that I do ? (*aside.* I am in dread he has some suspicion about my money). Aren't you just the sort of a man to be giving out reports I have money hid in my house ?

La Fleche. You have money hid in your house ?

Harpagon. No you rascal, I said no such thing. (*aside.* I am getting angry). I am asking did you, through ill will, give out reports that I had ?

La Fleche. Ah, what signifies you owning riches or not owning them. It is the one thing to me.

(*Harpagon lifting his hand to strike him*). Is it that you are arguing? Mind yourself or I'll gag you with a clout on the jaw! I tell you again to get out of that!

La Fleche. All right. I'll go.

Harpagon. Stop! Are you bringing away anything?

La Fleche. What would I be bringing away?

Harpagon. Come here till I see. Show me your hands.

La Fleche. There they are.

Harpagon. Now the others.

La Fleche. The others?

Harpagon. That's what I said.

La Fleche (*turning up palms of hands*). There they are.

Harpagon (*pointing to La Fleche's breeches*). Have you anything hid in there?

La Fleche. Look for yourself.

Harpagon (*feeling them*). These big breeches are very answerable for warehouses of stolen goods. Whoever invented them has a right to be hung.

La Fleche (*aside*). Ah, a man of that sort deserves all he is in dread of! It is well satisfied I would be to be robbing him!

Harpagon. Aye?

La Fleche. Well?

Harpagon. What's that you were saying about robbing ?

La Fleche. I say you are making a great rummaging to see did I rob you.

Harpagon. That's what I want to do !

(*Feels his pockets*).

La Fleche (*aside*). The devil fly away with misers and misery !

Harpagon. What's that you're saying ?

La Fleche. What am I saying ?

Harpagon. That's it. What are you saying about misers ?

La Fleche. I said let the devil take them.

Harpagon. Who are you talking about ?

La Fleche. About misers.

Harpagon. What misers are those ?

La Fleche. Thieves and villains.

Harpagon. What do you mean saying that ?

La Fleche. Why would you want to know ?

Harpagon. Because I have a right to know.

La Fleche. Is it what you think it is of yourself I am talking ?

Harpagon. I think what I think. But tell me what you mean saying that, or I will make you tell me.

La Fleche. I was talking to my hat.

Harpagon. I'll hat you !

La Fleche. Won't you allow me to put curses on misers ?

Harpagon. I won't let you go on with your impudence and your gab. Hold your tongue !

La Fleche. I made no mention of any person's name.

Harpagon. If you say one word you'll be sorry for it !

La Fleche. Whoever the cap fits let him wear it.

Harpagon. Will you hold your tongue !

La Fleche. If I do it is against my will.

Harpagon. Ah !

La Fleche (*showing Harpagon the pocket of his waistcoat*). Look at here another pocket. Are you satisfied now ?

Harpagon. Come on, give up what you have, without me searching you !

La Fleche. Give what up ?

Harpagon. What you took from me.

La Fleche. I took nothing at all from you.

Harpagon. Are you sure of that ?

La Fleche. Sure and certain.

Harpagon. Then go to the devil !

La Fleche (*aside*). That's a pleasant sort of a goodbye ! (*Goes*).

Harpagon. I leave it between you and your soul !—That now is a rogue of a fellow, he put

me out greatly. I would sooner not to see such a cur about the house. Indeed and indeed it is no little care it will need, I to be keeping so large a sum of money about the place. It is well for those that can put it out at interest, and keep with them but what is wanting from day to day. There would be no need then to be searching here and there striving to find a hiding place. It is not in a chest I would wish to put it, or a safe that would be rousing suspicions. I would put no trust at all in anything of the sort. Nothing but a bait to tempt thieves it would be, and the very first thing they would make their attack on.

(*Elise and Cleante come in talking together and stop at back of stage.*

Harpagon (*believing himself alone*). For all that, I don't know did I do right burying in my garden those ten thousand crowns were paid to me yesterday. Ten thousand pounds in gold is a very large sum to be minding. (*Catches sight of them*). Good jewel! Am I after betraying myself! I'm not sure was I talking aloud in the heat of my anger. (*To Cleante and Elise.*) What are you wanting?

Cleante. Nothing at all, sir.

Harpagon. It is long you are standing there?

Elise. We are but just come in.

Harpagon. Did you hear ?

Cleante. Did we hear what ?

Harpagon. The thing ——

Elise. What thing ?

Harpagon. The thing I am after saying.

Cleante. We did not.

Harpagon. You did ! you did !

Elise. I beg your pardon, we did not.

Harpagon. I know well you overheard some words ! I was only just saying to myself how hard it is to get money in these days, and what a lucky man it would be that would have in his hand ten thousand crowns.

Cleante. We had no notion of coming to listen to you, or of disturbing you at all.

Harpagon. I am glad you did not, or you might have got it in your head that it is I myself owns ten thousand crowns.

Cleante. We have no concern with your business.

Harpagon. I wish to God I had ten thousand crowns !

Cleante. I don't believe ——

Harpagon. That would be a good thing for me.

Elise. There are things that ——

Harpagon. I would find a good use for them.

Cleante. I am thinking ——

Harpagon. They would be answerable to me.

Elise. You are ——

Harpagon. I would not be complaining the way I am now of the times being so hard.

Cleante. Why would you be complaining? Everybody knows you are full of money.

Harpagon. What are you saying? I am full of money? Whoever is saying that is telling lies! There is no greater lie can be told. Rascals they are that set that story going.

Elise. Don't be so put out about it.

Harpagon. It is a queer thing my own children to betray me, and to turn to be my enemies.

Cleante. Is it saying you are well off makes me your enemy?

Harpagon. It is. That sort of talk, and the way you are scattering money, will be the cause one of these days of my throat being cut. There will a notion go about that I am made of money.

Cleante. What way am I spending money?

Harpagon. Do you ask me that? Is there any worse scandal than the dear suits you are wearing about the town? I was faulting your sister yesterday, but you are worse again. It is likely it will call down a judgment from heaven! The price of your clothes from your

hat to your shoes would be enough capital to start making a fortune. I have told you twenty times I like none of your ways. You are as if setting up to be a lord, and you must surely be robbing me to go dressed the way you are.

Cleante. What way am I robbing you ?

Harpagon. How would I know ? What way could you keep up that appearance, and you not robbing me ?

Cleante. Luck was with me card playing. What I win I put upon my back.

Harpagon. A great shame for you. What you win you have a right to put out at interest, the way it would come back to you again. Tell me now without going any farther, where is the use of all those ribbons you are tufted with ? Wouldn't a half dozen of ties be enough to hold your clothes together ? What call have you to go spending on wigs, and having your own hair that would put you to no expense at all ? I'll engage there is in your wigs and your ribbons at the least twenty pounds. Twenty pounds bring in every year eighteen shillings, six pence and three farthings, at only common interest.

Cleante. That is it.

Harpagon. Now there is another thing. (*He sees Cleante and Elise making signals.*) (*aside.*

It is likely they are making signs one to another to make a snap at my purse). What are you making signs for ?

Elise. We were consulting between ourselves which of us should take the first turn. We have each of us something to tell you.

Harpagon. And I myself have something to tell to the two of you.

Cleante. What we have to speak about is marriage.

Harpagon. And what I myself have to talk to you about is marriage.

Elise. Oh, father !

Harpagon. What do you mean saying Oh, father ! Is it the word that affrights you or the thing ?

Cleante. It is no wonder if we are put in a fright by such a notion. It is likely the choice you might make for us would not satisfy ourselves.

Harpagon. Never fear. Wait a while. I know very well what is right for the both of you. You will have no occasion to find fault with what I am going to do. And to begin at the beginning. Did you ever see a young girl, Marian her name is, that is lodging not far from this ?

Cleante. I did see her.

Harpagon (*to Elise*). Did you ?

Elise. I heard of her.

Harpagon. What do you think of her ?

Cleante. I think well of her.

Harpagon. Good looking ?

Cleante. Very bright and pleasing.

Harpagon. Well mannered ?

Cleante. She is that.

Harpagon. Wouldn't you say such a girl as that is worth thinking of ?

Cleante. I would indeed.

Harpagon. And that she would be a nice match ?

Cleante. She would indeed.

Harpagon. It is likely she would make a good housekeeper ?

Cleante. I wouldn't doubt it.

Harpagon. A man would have satisfaction with her ?

Cleante. He would.

Harpagon. There is but one small drawback. I am afraid she has not so good a fortune as one would wish.

Cleante. Oh, a fortune is no great matter beside marrying the right girl.

Harpagon. I beg your pardon. But what I have to say is, that if the fortune is not all one could wish, it might be made up for in other ways.

Cleante. To be sure it might.

Harpagon. I am well pleased that you agree with me. Her good looks and her civility have gained my heart entirely, and if I can hear that she has any fortune at all, I have my mind made up to marry her.

Cleante. What!

Harpagon. Well?

Cleante. You have made up your mind?

Harpagon. To marry Marian.

Cleante. Who? You —— You?

Harpagon. Yes, I, I, I. What about it?

Cleante. It has made my head go round. I will go away for a while.

Harpagon. That's nothing to signify. Go drink a glass of cold water in the kitchen. Young fellows in these times have not the strength of a chicken. Now Elise, that is what I have settled for myself. As to your brother, I have a widow-woman in my eye for him. There was mention made of her to me this morning; and as to yourself, I will bestow you on Mr. Anselme.

Elise. Mr. Anselme!

Harpagon. The same. A sensible settled man, up to no more than fifty years, and said to have whips of money.

Elise. I don't want to be married, please father.

Harpagon (*imitating her*). But I want you to be married, my little dote of a daughter!

Elise (*with another curtsey*). But begging Mr. Anselme's pardon (*curtseys*), I have no mind to marry him, with respects to you.

Harpagon. But begging your pardon (*mimicking curtsey*), you will marry him this very night.

Elise. To-night!

Harpagon. To-night.

Elise (*curtseying*). That will not happen, father.

Harpagon. It will happen, daughter.

Elise. It will not.

Harpagon. I say it will.

Elise. No, I say.

Harpagon. Yes, I say.

Elise. It is a thing you will never force me to.

Harpagon. It is a thing I will force you to.

Elise. I would sooner kill myself than marry such a husband.

Harpagon. You will not kill yourself, and you will marry him. What impudence you have! Was there ever heard a daughter to be speaking in that manner to her father!

Elise. Was there ever known a father marrying his daughter in such a way?

Harpagon. It is a match there can be nothing

said against. I'll engage there is no person at all but will say I have done well.

Elise. And I'll engage no person with any sense will think well of it.

Harpagon (*seeing Valere in the distance*). Here is Valere coming. Will you agree to make him the judge between us.

Elise. I agree to that.

Harpagon. Will you give in to his judgment ?

Elise. I will go by whatever he will say.

Harpagon. That's a bargain. (*Valere comes in*). Here, Valere, we have agreed on you to judge which of us is in the right, myself or my daughter.

Valere. It is yourself sir, not a doubt at all about it.

Harpagon. Do you know what we were talking about.

Valere. I do not. But I am sure you could not be wrong, you must be in the right.

Harpagon. It is my intention to give her this very day to a husband that has good means and good sense, and she tells me to my face that she will not have him. What do you say to that ?

Valere. What do I say is it ?

Harpagon. Yes.

Valere. Aye ?

Harpagon. What is it ?

Valere. I say that in my heart I am in agreement with yourself, and that you cannot but be right. But on the other hand, she is not entirely in the wrong.

Harpagon. What are you saying ? Mr. Anselme is a very good match—well reared, civil, and obliging, and with no child of his first marriage. Could she get anything better than that ?

Valere. That is so. But she might be thinking there is too much hurry, and that she would want a little time to make sure was her mind well satisfied.

Harpagon. It is a chance she ought not to miss. He will do for me what no other one will do, for he is ready to take her without a fortune.

Valere. Without a fortune ?

Harpagon. That's it.

Valere. I have no more to say. (*To Elise*). That is a reason no one can go against. You have to give in to that.

Harpagon. It is a great saving to myself.

Valere. So it should be too. To be sure your daughter might be saying to you that marriage is a bigger thing than anyone might think ; that according as it turns out there will be

happiness or there will be misery through the whole of the lifetime ; a contract that will last till death is not a thing to be made in a hurry.

Harpagon. Without a fortune !

Valere. You are right there. That should settle all. And there are people would be telling you, you should take notice of a girl's own liking. They might be saying the man is too far gone in age, and fixed in his own ways, for such a marriage to turn out well.

Harpagon. Without a fortune !

Valere. Sure enough there is no answer to that. Who the mischief could go against it ? To be sure there are a great many fathers would sooner give their daughter to a man that would be pleasing to her, than to one with the riches of the world.

Harpagon. Without a fortune !

Valere. That is true. It is that shuts my mouth altogether. Without a fortune ! There is no one at all would go against such a reason as that.

Harpagon (*aside, looking towards the garden.* Whist ! It seems to me I hear the barking of a dog. It might be some person in search of my money). (*To Valere*). Stop where you are. I will be back on the minute. (*Goes*).

Elise. Are you joking, Valere, talking to him as you are ?

Valere. I did it not to vex him, and to gain my way with him in the end. To go against him altogether would be the way to spoil all. Let on that you consent, and you will have some chance of getting your own way.

Elise. But this marriage !

Valere. We must find some excuse to stop it.

Elise. But what excuse can we find between this and evening ?

Valere. You must ask a delay, pretending some illness.

Elise. But they will find out I am pretending when they bring a doctor.

Valere. You are joking. What do doctors know about it ? Believe me you can have any sickness you may choose, and they will be able to tell you what it was brought it on you.

Harpagon (*at back of stage*). It was nothing at all, the Lord be praised !

Valere (*not seeing him*). If the worst comes to the worst we must make a run for it. Will you and love go as far as that ? (*Seeing Harpagon*). It is fitting for a daughter to be obedient to her father. She has a right not to ask what sort the husband is at all. So soon as the great word is said " Without a fortune,"

she should be satisfied to take him with no more delay!

Harpagon. That is right talk now.

Valere. I ask your pardon if I went too far saying what I did.

Harpagon. I am well satisfied with you. I will give her in charge to you. (*To Elise*). You need not be running away, I put it on him to keep a watch over you the same as myself.

Valere (*to Elise*). After that you should give in to what I say. (*To Harpagon, as she goes*). I will follow after her and be giving her good advice.

Harpagon. Do so and I'll be obliged to you.

Valere. It is right to keep a tight hand on her.

Harpagon. That is so. We ought now ——

Valere. Don't be troubling yourself at all. I am well able to make a good job of it.

Harpagon. Do that, do that. I am going to take a little ramble in the town; I will be coming back within two minutes.

Valere (*to Elise, going to side where she went out*). There is nothing in the wide world to put beside riches! It is thanking God you should be for giving you so good a father. It is he knows well what way to settle your life for you. When there is an offer made to take a girl

without a fortune, there is no other thing to look to. There is no other thing outside of that. A man to be young, handsome, upreared, quiet, steady, what is he at all compared with the man that wants no fortune!

Harpagon. That's the chat! Troth he is talking like Aristotle! Didn't I have great luck getting a servant the like of him?

ACT II.

Cleante, La Fleche.

Cleante. Ah, you traitor you, where did you go hiding? Didn't I give you my orders?

La Fleche. You did sir, and I came here to wait as you bade me, but your tyrant of a father hunted me in spite of myself, and I went near getting a thrashing.

Cleante. What way is our business going? There is more hurry than I thought. Since I saw you I found out that I have a rival in my father, no less!

La Fleche. Your father in love!

Cleante. Just so, and I had the work of the world to hide from him how greatly I was upset by the news.

La Fleche. That one to be meddling with love! What the hell is he thinking about? Is it a joke he is going to put on the world? Is it that love was made for the like of him?

Cleante. It is no less than a judgment on my sins, that fancy having come into his head.

La Fleche. And why did you hide from him that you had some notion of the girl yourself?

Cleante. I gave him no suspicion, the way I would find it easier to upset this plan he has ——What answers did they give you ?

La Fleche. Troth, sir, those that go borrowing go sorrowing. Any man must put up with strange things, and he getting like yourself into the hands of the moneylenders.

Cleante. You cannot manage to get the loan ?

La Fleche. That is not what I said. There is one Mr. Simon, a very smart willing man. has taken a great fancy to you. The very look of you, he was saying, is after gaining his heart.

Cleante. Will he give me the fifteen hundred pounds I am wanting ?

La Fleche. He will, but there are a few small conditions you must agree to if you want to carry the business through.

Cleante. Did you see the man that is going to lend me the money ?

La Fleche. Ah now, that is not the way this sort of work has to be done. He is more secret about it than yourself, and there is more of mystery than you would think. His name is not to be told whatever happens. He is to be brought to meet you to-day in a house that is loaned him for the purpose, until you will give him information as to your family and your means. It is certain that the name of your

father will be enough, with itself only, to carry all through.

Cleante. And above all my mother being dead, so that no one can take her fortune from me.

La Fleche. Here are a few little clauses he made the broker write out, to be showed you before anything could be done:

"Supposing that the lender sees all the securities, and is satisfied that the borrower is of age, and of a family of good property, safe, solid, and clear of encumbrances, a fair and proper deed shall be executed before an attorney, the most honest that can be found, he to be chosen by the lender, it being of most importance to him that the deed should be rightly drawn up."

Cleante. There is nothing to be said against that.

La Fleche. "The lender, not willing to put any weight upon his conscience, will ask no more interest than five and a half per cent."

Cleante. Five and a half per cent. That is fair enough. There is nothing to object to in that.

La Fleche. That is true. "But as the said lender has not by him at present the sum in question, and that to oblige the borrower he

is forced to borrow from another at twenty per cent, it is agreed the said borrower should pay this interest without prejudice to the rest, seeing it is only to do the borrower a favour that the said lender engages himself to get this loan."

Cleante. What the devil! What sort of a Jew is this, or a bloodsucker! That is more than twenty-five per cent.

La Fleche. That is so. That is what I said. You had best think it over a while.

Cleante. What would I think over? I must have money, and I must agree to all.

La Fleche. The very answer I gave him.

Cleante. Is there anything more?

La Fleche. Only one little condition. "Of the 1,500 pounds wanted, the lender cannot give more than 1,200 in cash, and as to the rest, the borrower must take it out in wearables, in furniture, and in ornaments, according to the list here following, and that the lender has put down straight and fair at the lowest possible price."

Cleante. What does that mean?

La Fleche. Listen now to the inventory: "First, one four-post bed, upholstered with Hungary lace, in olive green cloth, with six chairs and a quilt to match, all in good order, and lined with taffeta, shot red and blue.

"Item, a tent bedstead covered with good serge, dead rose colour, with silk fringes and tassels."

Cleante. What use does he think I can make of that?

La Fleche. Wait a minute. "Item, one set of tapestry hangings, with the loves of Hercules and Venus. Item, one large walnut table, with twelve turned legs like pillars. Can be drawn out at each end, and is furnished with six footstools."

Cleante. What is that to me?

La Fleche. Wait a minute. "Item, three large muskets, inlaid with mother of pearl, and the rests belonging to them."

"Item, one brick furnace, having two retorts and three receivers, very useful to any person that has a mind to go distilling."

Cleante. I am getting vexed!

La Fleche. Have patience now. "Item, one Bologna lute, with full set of strings, only a few of them wanting. Item, one bagatelle board and one draught board, with a game of goose, recovered from the Greeks; very suitable for passing the time when a person had nothing to do. Item, one lizard skin, three feet and a half long, stuffed with hay. A very pretty curiosity to hang from the ceiling of a

room. The whole of the above being honestly worth more than four hundred and fifty pounds, is reduced by the moderation of the lender."

Cleante. That he may be choked with the same moderation! The pickpocket, the blackmailer! Was there ever such robbery heard of! He is not content with the twenty-five per cent. interest without asking me to take his old rubbish heap in the place of three hundred pounds! I won't get five hundred out of the whole loan. And there is nothing to do but to accept his terms, for the brute has his hand upon my throat!

La Fleche. Begging your pardon, sir, you would seem to be taking the road Panurge took to his ruin, forestalling your money, buying dear, selling cheap, eating the corn in the ear.

Cleante. What can I do? This is what sons are brought to through the miserable meanness of fathers. And then you will hear people wonder if you wish them out of the world!

La Fleche. The quietest person on earth would be set raging mad seeing your own father's stinginess. That is sure enough. I have no mind to be hanged more than another. The Lord be praised, I have wits to play my

own game and to keep myself free from the rope. But I declare to goodness it would be a right thing to rob that one: In my opinion I would be doing a good action doing that.

Cleante. Give me that inventory till I'll take another look at it.

(*Harpagon and Simon come in at back of stage.*

Simon. Yes, sir, it is a young chap is in want of money; the need is pressing on him, and he will give in to any terms at all.

Harpagon. But can you be sure there is no danger of any loss? Can you tell me what is his name and his family, and his means?

Simon. I cannot do that, for it was but by chance I met with him. But he will make all that known to you himself, and his serving man told me anyone would be satisfied when they would hear his account. All I can be certain is, that there is great wealth in his family, that his mother is dead, and that he will promise, if you wish it, that his father will be buried within eight months.

Harpagon. There is something in that now. Charity tells us, Simon, to oblige any person we can, and it being in our power.

Simon. So it does too.

La Fleche (*aside to Cleante, recognising*

Simon). What does this mean ? Our money-lender, Simon, talking with your father ?

Cleante. Has somebody told him who I am ? Have you yourself betrayed me.

Simon (*to Cleante and La Fleche*). Ah, ha ! you are in a great hurry ! Who was it told you this is the house ? (*To Harpagon*) It was not myself anyway gave them your name and your address. But in my opinion it does no harm at all. They are able to do business, and you can make your own bargain with them.

Harpagon. What are you saying ?

Simon (*pointing at Cleante*). This is the gentleman wants a loan of the fifteen hundred pounds I was talking of.

Harpagon. What's that you rascal ! Is it you that are giving yourself up to such bad practises ?

Cleante. What's that ! It is you, father, are giving yourself up to cheating and extortion !

(*Simon runs away and La Fleche hides himself.*

Harpagon. Is it to run to ruin you want, by such scandalous borrowing ?

Cleante. Is it to get riches you are striving by such shameful grabbing ?

Harpagon. How dare you show yourself to me after this !

Cleante. How dare you show yourself to any person at all!

Harpagon. Have you no shame I ask, getting into such bad ways, running into such tremendous expense, for to throw away the property your parents earned for you, sweating it out in their bones!

Cleante. Have you no shame, letting yourself down with such a business? Giving up an honourable name for the greed of putting one coin upon another! Charging a higher interest than any extortion that ever was invented by the thirstiest leech of the lot!

Harpagon. Get out of my sight you scoundrel you! Get out of my sight!

Cleante. Is it worse in your opinion for a man to go buy money he is in need of or to steal money he has no use for!

Harpagon. Get out of that I tell you, and don't be scalding my ears! (*Alone.*) I am no way sorry this has happened. It is a caution to me to keep my eye on him better than before.

(*Enter Frosine.*

Frosine. Sir——

Harpagon. Wait a minute. I will come back and talk to you. (*Aside*). It is as well for me to take a look is my money safe.

(*Goes out.*

La Fleche (*coming in and not seeing Frosine*). That now was a very funny thing to happen! The old man must surely have a secondhand warehouse in some place, for we have never seen any of those things he had written in his list.

Frosine. Is that you my poor La Fleche? What is it brings you here?

La Fleche. Ah, ha, that's you, Frosine. What are you doing here?

Frosine. What I am doing in every place—helping along other peoples business, making myself of use to them, profiting the best way I can by whatever wits I possess. You know that in this world a person has to live by being smart. All the fortune God gave me was a hand to put in every other one's affairs.

La Fleche. Are you doing anything for the master of this house?

Frosine. I am. I have taken a case in hand for him that I hope I will get some reward for.

La Fleche. From him is it! You will be clever, and very clever, if you can knock anything out of that one. I tell you money is scarce to find in this place.

Frosine. There are some services will work wonders.

La Fleche. I beg your pardon, you don't

know master Harpagon ! Of all the men of the whole world, it is he himself is the hardest and the meanest. There is no service anyone could do him would bring his thankfulness so far as to open his pocket. Praises he will give you in plenty, but as to money, not a mite. He shows a very dry sort of gratitude. He wouldn't so much as say " I give you my blessing," like another. "Give" is a word that would seem to scare him.

Frosine. Let me alone, I know well what way to draw milk from my customers, to open their hearts, to tickle their vanity, till I find out what is their weak side.

La Fleche. That will not serve you here. I bet you where it is a question of money you will never get to the soft side of Harpagon. No less than a Turk he is, and beyond any Turk ever came into the world. To burst him in pieces you must, before you would get anything out of him. With him money is before name and fame and behaviour. To see a beggar or a creditor would give him convulsions. To strike at his heart it would, and would give him his death blow. Stop, here he is coming. Good-bye to you !

Harpagon (*in a low voice*). All is safe, all is safe —— Well what is it, Frosine ?

Frosine. Well, its yourself is looking grand out and out!

Harpagon. Who? Myself is it?

Frosine. I never saw you so fresh and so airy.

Harpagon. Do you say so?

Frosine. It is getting young you are. There are many having but twenty-five years are older than yourself!

Harpagon. For all that, Frosine, I am up to sixty years.

Frosine. What signifies sixty years? It is the best time of life that is. You are coming into your bloom.

Harpagon. That is so. But twenty years to be taken off, would do no harm at all.

Frosine. It is funning you are. You have no need of that. Sure the dough you are made of would last through a hundred years.

Harpagon. You think that?

Frosine. To be sure I do. You have all the marks of it. Stop a minute. Oh, it is easy seen between your two eyes, the sign of a long life!

Harpagon. Do you say so?

Frosine. Not a doubt of it. Show me your hand. Did ever anyone see the like of that for a line of life!

Harpagon. What is that now?

Frosine. Can't you see how far that line goes ?

Harpagon. Well, and what may that mean ?

Frosine. Faith I said a hundred years, but you will pass your six score.

Harpagon. Is that possible ?

Frosine. Nothing would kill you, only to be knocked on the head ! You will be burying your children and your children's children.

Harpagon. That is great. What way is our business going ?

Frosine. You need not ask that. Was I ever known to mix myself with anything I would not bring through ? I have great skill in match-making above all. Give me time, and there are no two in the world I could not join. I am sure if I took it in hand I could marry the Grand Turk to the Republic of Venice. To be sure there was no such difficulty in this business, I being acquainted with the girl and her mother. I used to be always talking about you. I told the mother you had your mind made up to marry Marian, through seeing her in the window and walking out in the street.

Harpagon. What answer did she make ?

Frosine. Believe me she was well pleased. I told her you were wishing her daughter should come this evening to the signing of the marriage

contract of your own daughter, and that she could put her in charge of myself.

Harpagon. It is that I am forced, Frosine, to give a supper for Mr. Anselme, and I would be well pleased she to come to it.

Frosine. That will do. After dinner she will make acquaintance with your daughter, and then she will go take a view of the fair, and come back here for the supper.

Harpagon. Very good. They can go together in my carriage to the fair ; I will give them the lend of it.

Frosine. That will suit her well.

Harpagon. But tell me, Frosine, did you sound the mother as to the fortune she will give her ? Did you tell her that she must give her some help, and make some struggle, and go so far as to bleed herself a little on an occasion of this sort. For in the end there is no one would marry a girl unless she would bring something with her.

Frosine. Ah, that is a girl will bring you in three hundred pounds a year.

Harpagon. Three hundred pounds a year !

Frosine. To be sure. First of all, she has been reared up in a very poor way of living ; she has been used to live on cabbage and a drop of milk and the like, so she will not be asking

grand cooking, or pearl barley, or fancy dishes, as another woman would. And that is no trifle at all, but will save every year fifty pounds at the very least. Besides that, as to dress, all she needs is to be clean ; she has no mind for dear stuffs or brooches, or good furniture, that girls the like of her are mostly cracked after. That now is worth more than a hundred pounds in the year. And more again, she is greatly against card playing, and that is not common in these times. I know a lady in our part has lost at Twenty-Five, six hundred pounds in this year. But we will count to her but the quarter of it. A hundred and fifty for play, one hundred for clothes and jewels—that makes two hundred and fifty, and fifty that we put down for diet. There now are your three hundred pounds a year well counted.

Harpagon. Yes, that is not bad. But the account has nothing solid in it.

Frosine. I beg your pardon. Is it nothing solid you are getting, and she bringing you great good sense, and great liking for plain dresses, and a great hatred of gambling.

Harpagon. It is only foolishness to be counting up a fortune out of money she will not cause me to spend. I have no intention to give a

receipt for what I never handled. And I must get something in my fist.

Frosine. Never fear, you will get enough. And they were speaking of some property they own in some far place, that you will be the master of.

Harpagon. I must go look at that. But, Frosine, there is another thing makes me uneasy. The girl is young as you see, and it is the custom for youngsters to like the company of those of their own age, and to be wanting to be always with them. I am in dread a man of my age may not be to her taste, and it may bring about some little troubles in the house, and that would not serve me.

Frosine. Ah, how little you know her! That is another thing about her. I had it in mind to tell you. She has the greatest dislike to young men. It is only for old ones she has any liking at all.

Harpagon. Is that so?

Frosine. It is. I wish you could have heard her talking on that point. She cannot bear the sight of any young fellow at all, but she is never better pleased than when she can meet with an old man having a grand long beard. The farther in age they are the more she likes them, and I would advise you not to be giving

yourself out younger than what you are. She would wish a man to have sixty years at the least, and it is not four months since she was about to be married, and broke off the match because the bridegroom turned out to be but fifty-six, and wore no spectacles, and he signing the contract.

Harpagon. For that cause only!

Frosine. For no other thing. She said fifty-six years would not satisfy her, and that she has no opinion of a man that does not wear spectacles.

Harpagon. That is news you are giving me.

Frosine. Oh, she goes farther with it than you would think. There are in her room some pictures, and what are they would you say? Of Adonis, Paris and Apollo? Not at all, but the likeness of Saturn, of King Priam, of old Nestor, of Father Anchisis, and he upon his son's back.

Harpagon. Very good. I would never now have thought that, and I am well pleased to know that is her taste. Indeed I myself to be a woman, I would have no taste at all for young chaps.

Frosine. I am sure of that. Queer rubbish they are to be falling in love with. Brats in bibs, pink and white nurselings! No more

flavour in them than in the white of an egg.

Harpagon. I cannot know or understand why it is women should be so fond of them.

Frosine. Born fools they are. Is there any sense at all in making much of youngsters. Is it men they are at all, those young pups ? Is there anyone at all would get fond of them ?

Harpagon. That's what I am always saying. With their voice chirruping the same as a pullet, and their three cats' hairs of a moustache, their waistcoats —— their breeches ——

Frosine. They are well built indeed alongside of a man like yourself. There's a man for you ! There is something worth looking at ! To be shaped the way you are and dressed the way you are—that is the means to awaken love !

Harpagon. You think me well looking ?

Frosine. Do you ask me that ? A lovely man you are, it is drawn in a picture you should be. Turn towards me if you please. There could nothing better be seen. Let me see you walk now. There is a figure for you ! Clean and well planned you are, having no blemish at all.

Harpagon. I have no complaint on me indeed, the Lord be praised, only that the cough comes at me an odd time. (*He coughs.*)

Frosine. Sure that's nothing. You have a very nice way of coughing that becomes you very well.

Harpagon. Tell me this now. Did Marian see me yet ? Did she take notice of me as I passed ?

Frosine. She did not, but we have talked a great deal about you. I gave her a full account of you, and I was not without putting praises on you, and saying any person would be well off, getting yourself for a husband.

Harpagon. You did well, and I am obliged to you.

Frosine. I have one small request to make to you, sir. I am in a lawsuit, and it is going against me for the want of means. (*Harpagon looks grave*). It would be easy for you to help me gain it if you have any little friendship for me —— You will hardly believe now how glad she will be seeing you —— (*He grows lively again.*) It is well pleased she will be with you; that ruff in the ancient fashion will be greatly to her taste. And the tags of twine that join your jacket to your breeches. She will go raving about you. She will be well satisfied having a man with tags.

Harpagon. I am very glad to hear that.

Frosine. That lawsuit now is a great weight

upon me. (*He grows grave again.*) I am destroyed if I lose it, and some little assistance would give me a good chance.— I would wish you to see her delight hearing me talking of you. — (*He grows cheerful.*) Her eyes were sparkling and I telling her what sort you are. Before I left her she had her heart set on the match being made with no delay.

Harpagon. I am glad to hear that now, Frosine. I am greatly obliged to you indeed.

Frosine. You will not refuse me, sir, the little help I am asking of you ? (*He grows grave.*) That would straighten things out for me, and I would be thankful to you to the end of life and time.

Harpagon. Good morrow to you. I have to finish my letters.

Frosine. You never could help me at any time I would be in more need of it.

Harpagon. I will give orders for my carriage to bring you out to the fair.

Frosine. I would not ask it if I was not driven to it.

Harpagon. I will take care the supper is early, the way it will not disagree with you.

Frosine. Sure you won't refuse me this little thing I am asking ? You cannot think how pleasant ——

Harpagon. I am going. They are calling for me. I will see you again bye and bye.

(*Goes out.*

Frosine. That the fever may get a grip of you, you ugly cur you! The niggard, to hold out against all my attacks! But I won't give up the business! I have the other side yet to draw my reward from!

ACT III.

HARPAGON, CLEANTE, ELISE, VALERE, DAME CLAUDE (HOLDING A BROOM), MASTER JACQUES, LA MERLUCHE, BRINDAVOINE.

Harpagon. Come here the whole of you, till I'll give you my orders for the evening, and settle everyone's work. Come here, Mrs. Claude, till I'll begin with you. That's right, you are ready armed, let you give the whole place a good cleaning; but take care would you rub the furniture too hard, to be wearing it out. Along with that, I will put you in charge of the bottles while the supper will be going on. If any one of them should be missing, or be broken, it is on you I will lay it, I will stop it out of your wages.

Jacques (*aside*). That chastising now will not be without profit.

Harpagon. That will do. (*She goes*). As to you, Brindavoine, and you, Merluche, what you have to do is to rinse out the glasses and to hand round the wine; but only when people are drouthy, and not like those meddling waiters that go teasing them, putting it in

their heads to take drink when they had no thought of it at all. Do not proffer it before they have made a second asking, and don't forget to mix with it a good share of water.

Jacques (*aside*). That is it. Wine without water is apt to get into the head.

La Merluche. Will we take off our blouses, sir ?

Harpagon. Do so, the time you see the company coming to the door, and take good care not to spoil your clothes.

Brindavoine. Sure you know one of the flaps of my coat is all stained with a great patch of lamp oil.

La Merluche. And my own breeches are in holes behind. I'd be ashamed any person to see me.

Harpagon. Ah, be quiet ! Can't you keep your back to the wall, and only show your front to the company ? (*To Brindavoine, showing him how to hold his hat to hide the oil stain*). And as to you, let you hold your hat this way when you are attending. (*La Merluche and Brindavoine go out*). As for you, Elise, you will keep an eye on everything that is taken away, and see there is no waste ; that is very suitable work for a young girl. And besides that, make yourself ready to give a welcome to my wife

that is to be, that is coming to visit you, and to bring you out with her to the fair. Do you hear what I am saying ?

Elise. Yes, father.

Harpagon. Yes, you goose. (*Elise goes*). (*To Cleante*). And as to you, my young pup of a son, that I was kind enough to forgive that borrowing business, let you not take it in your head to look sour at her.

Cleante. I to look sour at her ! And why would I look sour ?

Harpagon. Don't I know the way youngsters have, and their father to marry secondly ? And the eye they throw on what is called the stepmother. But if you have a mind to make me forget your own bad behaviour, it is what I advise you, to put away all cross looks, and to give her as good a welcome as you can.

Cleante. To tell no lie, father, I cannot promise to be satisfied, seeing her my stepmother ; but as to giving her a good reception, I promise you I will not fail in doing that.

Harpagon. Take care would you.

Cleante. You will see you will have no reason for complaint on that point.

Harpagon. You are showing sense. (*Cleante goes*). Now, Valere, I want your help. Come here, Jacques, I have kept you for the last.

Jacques. Is it to your coachman you are wanting to speak or to your cook ?

Harpagon. I have to speak to the two of them.

Jacques. Which will you want first ?

Harpagon. The cook.

Jacques. Wait a minute so, if you please.

(*Takes off his coachman's coat, and appears dressed as a cook.*

Harpagon. What the mischief is this for ?

Jacques. You have but to give your orders.

Harpagon. I have engaged myself to give a supper to-night.

Jacques (*aside*). That's a great wonder indeed.

Harpagon. Tell me now, will you do it in style ?

Jacques. I will if you will give me plenty of money ?

Harpagon. What the devil ! Always money ! It is as if there was no other thing to say, Money ! Money ! Money ! They have but the one word in their mouth, money ! Talking always of money ! It is as near to them as the five fingers to the hand !

Valere. I never heard so impudent an answer. That would be a great surprise indeed, to spread out a good meal after going to great expense ! That is easy enough. Any fool could do that

much. But it needs a clever man to make a great show, and he spending but very little.

Jacques (*to Valere*). Faith, Mr. Manager, I'll be obliged to you to tell your secret, or to take my place in the kitchen. It seems as if you are wanting to rule everything in this house.

Harpagon. Stop your chat. What is it you want.

Jacques. There is your gentleman of a steward says he will do it cheap for you.

Harpagon. Hay ? I tell you to answer me.

Jacques. How many will there be at the table ?

Harpagon. Eight or ten we will be —— But we need count for but eight. Where there is enough to satisfy eight there is enough for ten.

Valere. That is true enough.

Jacques. Well we must have four kinds of soup and five small dishes —— Soups —— Side dishes.

Harpagon. What the mischief ! Do you want to treat the entire town ?

Jacques. Roast meat ——

Harpagon (*putting his hand on his mouth*). You traitor you, would you devour all my means !

Jacques. Flank dishes ——

Harpagon (*putting his hand on his mouth again*). Any more ?

Valere (*to Jacques*). Have you a mind to make all the company burst ? Did the master invite his friends for to cram them to death ? Go now and read a while the principles of health, and ask the doctors is there any worse danger than over feeding ?

Harpagon. That is it.

Valere. Let you learn, master Jacques, yourself and the like of you, that a table spread with too many dishes is no less than a murderer ; and that to show yourself the friend of the company that are asked there should be scarcity through the whole of the meal. Wasn't it said in the ancient writings : " We should eat to live and not live to eat."

Harpagon. Ah ! That is a good saying ! Draw near till I'll hug you to me for saying that word ! That is the best I ever heard in my lifetime. We must live to eat and not eat to live —— No, that's not it. What was it you said ?

Valere. We must eat to live and not live to eat.

Harpagon (*to Jacques*). That's it. Do you hear ? (*To Valere*). What great man now was it said that ?

Valere. I disremember his name.

Harpagon. Don't forget to write out those words for me! I will get them cut in letters of gold on the chimney-piece of my parlour.

Valere. I will not fail. And as to your supper, you have but to leave it to me; I will regulate it as it should be.

Harpagon. Do so then, Valere.

Jacques. All the better. I'll have the less trouble.

Harpagon (*to Valere*). What we want is things people cannot eat much of and that satisfy them very soon. A pie now would be very filling, or a harico of beans that would be greasy.

Valere. Leave it to me!

Harpagon. Now, Jacques, let you go wash my carriage.

Jacques. Wait a minute, it is to the coachman you are speaking (*putting on his great coat*). You are saying?

Harpagon. I am bidding you to clean the carriage, and to get ready the horses to bring to the fair.

Jacques. Your horses is it? Faith, they are not at all in a fitting state to go travel. I will not say they are lying on their litter, that would be a lie, for there is none under them. But

you have made them keep so many fast days that they are now but the shadows or the ghosts, or the patterns, of a horse.

Harpagon. They are very bad! They do not work at all.

Jacques. If they do nothing, is that a cause they should eat nothing? It would be better the poor beasts to have work and to have food along with it. It is scalding my heart to see them the way they are. I have a wish for my horses, and to see them suffer, it is the same as to suffer myself. It is often I take the bit from my own mouth to give to them. A person would have a very bad nature, showing no pity at all to his neighbour.

Harpagon. It is no hard work going as far as the fair.

Jacques. It fails me the courage to bring them. My heart would not allow me give them a cut of the whip. What way could they go drag a carriage, and they not able hardly to drag themselves?

Valere. I will go ask Picard that is near at hand to come drive them. We will be wanting him anyway to lend a hand with the supper.

Jacques. You can, and welcome. I would sooner they to die under any person's hand than my own.

Valere. Master Jacques is very tender-hearted!

Harpagon. Be quiet!

Jacques. I tell you, master, I have no liking at all for flattery; I can see all that one does, minding bread, minding wine, sparing salt and candles, is for nothing at all but to be in with you and to get around you. That must vex me; and another thing, I do not like to hear the way people do be talking of you. For in spite of all I have a wish for you, and after my horses you are nearer to me than any other one.

Harpagon. And maybe you will tell me, master Jacques, what it is they say of me?

Jacques. I would, sir, if I could but be sure it would not vex you.

Harpagon. Not at all, but well pleased I would be, knowing what is said about me.

Jacques. Well, sir, as you wish it, I will tell you, straight and plain, that they do be making fun of you in every place, that they are always humbugging us on your account; they are never better pleased than when they get the better of you. Stories they do be telling about your close ways. There are some say you get an almanac printed for your own use, and the fast days and the days of abstinence doubled in it,

the way you will profit, keeping your servants from meat. Others say you always start a quarrel with your workmen about the new year, or the time they will be leaving you, the way you need give them no present. One story lays down that you had a neighbour's cat prosecuted one time, for having ate what was left of a leg of mutton. Another says the coachman that was here before myself caught you one night, and you stealing the oats from your own horses in the darkness, and that he gave you a great thrashing that you never were heard to speak about. Well, if you want more, I may say we can go to no place without hearing you made a mock of. You are the butt and the laughing stock of the whole town. They never speak of you by any other name but the Miser, the money grabber, the niggard, and the bloodsucker.

Harpagon (*beating Jacques*). You are a fool, a sot, a rascal, and an impudent villain!

Jacques. Well now, didn't I make a good guess, only you would not heed me. I told you that you would be vexed, and you hearing the truth.

Harpagon. Let you learn to mind your tongue! (*Goes*).

Valere (*laughing*). So far as I see, Master

Jacques, you got a bad reward for your truth telling.

Jacques. Begob, Mr. Upstart, you are making a great man of yourself; but this is not your own business. You may go laugh at your own thrashing when you will get it, but you need not come laughing at mine.

Valere. Ah, now Jacques, don't be getting cross.

Jacques (*aside.* He is coming down a bit. I'll let on to be a bit of a bully, and if he is fool enough to be taken in, I'll touch him up). Look now, if you are laughing and grinning, I myself am not laughing, and if you rouse me I will put another sort of a grin on you. (*He pushes Valere to the back of stage, threatening him.*)

Valere. Be easy now.

Jacques. How be easy? It does not please me to be easy.

Valere. If you please.

Jacques. You are full of impudence.

Valere. Mr. Master Jacques!

Jacques. There is no Mr. Master Jacques at all. If I get a stick I'll knock the consequence out of you

Valere. Is it a stick you are talking about? (*Valere makes Jacques go back in his turn.*)

Jacques. I'm saying nothing about you.

Valere. Do you know, Mr. Silly, that I am a man to take a stick to you myself ?

Jacques. I wouldn't doubt it.

Valere. And that you are nothing but a scum of a cook !

Jacques. I know it well.

Valere. And that you don't know me yet.

Jacques. I ask your pardon.

Valere. And I have no fancy for your jokes (*giving him some blows of a stick.*) Let you learn now that you are a bad joker. (*Goes.*)

Jacques (*alone*). My curse upon truth telling ! I give it up from this out. I say nothing about my master. He has the right to chastise me. But as to this interloper of a steward, I'll knock satisfaction out of him yet.

(*Frosine and Marian come in.*

Frosine. Do you know, Master Jacques, is your master within ?

Jacques. He is, indeed. It is too well I know it.

Frosine. Tell him, if you please, we are come.

Jacques. Ah, that's all right. (*Goes.*)

Marian. Oh, Frosine, I am greatly upset ! To tell the truth I am in dread of seeing him.

Frosine. But why would you be so uneasy ?

Marian. Do you ask me that ? Can't you

see how affrighted any person must be coming to see the scaffold they are to suffer on!

Frosine. I see well that you to choose a death would please you, it is not Harpagon you would choose for the rope about your neck. And I know well by the look of you, it is that fair-haired youngster you were telling me about, is come back into your mind.

Marian. That is so. I will tell no lie. I cannot but remember his civility coming to see us as he did.

Frosine. And you don't know who was he?

Marian. I do not. But I know if I had my way, he would be my choice man. And I know it is since I saw him that the thought of the husband you have chosen for me gets uglier every day.

Frosine. Ah, to be sure, these well-looking lads have a taking way, but the most of them are as poor as rats. It is best for you take an old husband that has a good way of living. To be sure he will not be so pleasing to you, and there will be some drawbacks in a man of the sort, but that will not last for ever. Believe me, the time you bury him you will be left with good means, and you will find a comrade to your liking that will make amends for all.

Marian. It is a strange thing, that to be

happy we have to wait for some person's death. And death is not always so helpful to our plans as we thought it would be.

Frosine. Is it humbugging you are? Sure you are only to marry him on the condition he will leave you a widow in a short while. That has a right to be put down in the contract. It would be very unmannerly of him to stay living beyond three months. —— Here he is now coming.

Marian. Oh, Frosine! What a fright he is!

Harpagon (*to Marian*). Don't take offence now, my beauty, that I have on my glasses coming to see you. I know well they are no way needed for making out your good looks. But isn't it with glasses we go looking at the stars? And it is what I say, you are yourself a star, and the best of the whole of the stars that are to be found in the country of the stars —— Frosine, she is saying no word. —— I do not see her to be showing any great joy at the sight of me.

Frosine. It is that she is strange yet. And besides that, a young girl would always be ashamed to be showing what is in her mind.

Harpagon (*to Frosine*). That is so. (*To Marian*). Here, sweetheart, is my daughter come to welcome you. (*Elise comes in.*

Marian. I should have asked to see you before this.

Elise. No, but I myself should have called to see you.

Harpagon. Look at her—how tall she is. There is the quickest growth in the weeds there is no profit in.

Marian (*aside to Frosine*). I do not like him at all.

Harpagon (*aside to Frosine*). What does the darling say ?

Frosine. She says she is well pleased with you.

Harpagon. You are too kind to me my love.

Marian (*aside*). The pig !

Harpagon. I am greatly obliged to you for taking a liking to me.

Marian. I can't go on with this.

(*Cleante, Valere, and Brindavoine come in.*

Harpagon. Here now is my son that is come to salute you.

Marian (*aside to Frosine*). Oh, Frosine, what a meeting ! It was of him I was talking to you !

Frosine (*to Marian*). A very strange chance indeed.

Harpagon. You are wondering to see me with grown-up children. But I will soon be rid of the both of them.

Cleante (*to Marian*). This is a thing I never expected myself. I was greatly surprised when my father told me of his plans.

Marian. I can say the same thing. I am as much amazed as yourself.

Cleante. I am sure, ma'am, my father could not have made a better choice —— and it is a great delight to me to see you here —— But I will not go so far as to say I will be glad to see you made my stepmother.

Harpagon. That is great impertinence ! That is a strange sort of a compliment.

Marian. It is the same way with myself. If you are not craving to have me for a step-mother, neither have I any wish you to be my step-son.

Harpagon. She is right saying that. Answer a fool according to his foolishness. I ask your pardon, my dear, for his rudeness. He is a young fool doesn't know what he is talking about.

Marian. What he said gave me no offence at all. It is best for him tell me his true thoughts. I am better pleased hearing what he said than if he had spoken in any other way.

Harpagon. It is too good you are, making excuses for him. He will get better sense after

a while, and you will see he will change his opinion.

Cleante. No I will never change it, and I ask her to believe that.

Harpagon. This is beyond the beyonds! He is worse again than before.

Cleante. Would you wish me to tell a lie?

Harpagon. At it again! It is best talk of some other thing.

Cleante. Very well, as you wish me to make a change, let me put myself in place of my father, and let me tell you I never saw in the world any such a charmer as yourself. Yes, Miss Marian, there could be no good luck so good as to win you. I have set my mind on no other thing. There is nothing I would not do with that before me —— the hardest things ——

Harpagon. Go easy now if you please.

Cleante. I am just paying her a few compliments on your behalf.

Harpagon. I have a tongue of my own without wanting an interpreter of your sort. Here, give us those chairs ——

Frosine. No, but it is best go to the fair, the way we can come back sooner and be talking with you.

Harpagon (*to Brindavoine*). Put the horses

to the carriage. (*To Marian*). I ask your pardon that I did not think of asking you to take some refreshment before starting.

Cleante. But I thought of it, father, and I ordered some China oranges and marmalade and sweet cakes to be brought in. I sent to order them in your name.

Harpagon (*aside to Valere*). Valere !

Valere (*aside to Harpagon*). He has lost his wits !

Cleante. Do you think it is not enough ? This lady will be kind enough to excuse it.

Marian. It was not needful at all.

Cleante. Did you ever see, Miss Marian, a handsomer diamond than the one in my father's ring ?

Marian. It is very shining indeed.

Cleante. You must look at it nearer.

Marian. It is beautiful, surely ; it would seem to throw out fire.

Cleante (*putting himself before Marian, who is going to give back the diamond*). No, it is on so nice a hand —— It is a present my father is giving you.

Harpagon. Is it me ?

Cleante. I am sure you would wish her to keep it for your sake.

Harpagon (*aside to Cleante*). What's that ?

Cleante (*to Marian*). He is making signs for you to accept it.

Marian. I don't want it.

Cleante. You are joking. He would not think of taking it back.

Harpagon (*aside*). He will drive me mad.

Marian. It would be ——

Cleante (*still preventing her from giving back the diamond*). No, no, I tell you it would offend him.

Marian. If you please ——

Cleante. Not at all.

Harpagon. My curse ——

Cleante. See how vexed he is that you refuse it.

Harpagon (*aside to Cleante*). Ah, you traitor!

Cleante (*to Marian*). You see he is losing patience.

Harpagon (*aside to Cleante*). You villain you!

Cleante. It is not my fault, father. I am doing what I can to make her keep it, but she is someway stubborn.

Harpagon (*aside, threatening Cleante*). You scoundrel!

Cleante. You are the cause of my father attacking me!

Harpagon (*aside to Cleante, with same gesture*). You robber!

Cleante (*to Marian*). You will bring a fit of sickness on him. Oh do give in, Miss Marian.

Frosine (*to Marian*). Ah, what a fuss you are making! Keep the ring, can't you, and the gentleman wishing it.

Marian (*to Harpagon*). I will keep it now, not to vex you, and I will give it back another time.

Brindavoine (*coming in*). There is a man outside, sir, is wanting to speak with you.

Harpagon. Tell him I am busy, and to come back another day.

Brindavoine. He says he has brought money for you.

Harpagon (*to Marian*). Excuse me, I will be back in a minute. (*Brindavoine goes.*

La Merluche (*running in, and knocking over Harpagon*). Sir ?

Harpagon. Oh, you have me killed!

Cleante. What is it, father. What is the matter ?

Harpagon. The rascal is bribed by my debtors to break my neck.

Valere (*to Harpagon*). It won't be much.

La Merluche (*to Harpagon*). I beg your pardon, sir, I thought I did well running so fast.

Harpagon. What was it brought you here, you murderer ?

La Merluche. To tell you your two horses are without shoes!

Harpagon. Let them be brought to the smith without delay.

Cleante. While we are waiting I will entertain the young lady for you, father. I will have the refreshments brought into the garden.

(*Cleante, Marian, Frosine, La Merluche go to garden at back.*

Harpagon (*to Valere*). Valere —— here, have an eye to all that —— and save all you can of the sweetcakes till we'll send them back to the shop.

Valere. That will do. (*Goes.*)

Harpagon. Oh, the impudence of that son of mine! Has he a mind to bring me to entire ruin?

ACT IV.

CLEANTE, MARIAN, ELISE, FROSINE (COMING IN FROM GARDEN).

Cleante. Come back here. It is a better place. There is no suspicious person near, and we can say what we like.

Elise. My brother has told me, Marian, how things are between you. I know what these crosses and vexations are myself, and I can feel for what you are going through.

Marian. It is a great comfort to have anyone like you on my side, and I hope you will be my friend always.

Frosine. It is a great pity for the two of you not to have told me of your troubles before this. I would never have let things go so far as they have gone.

Cleante. What could you do? It was through my own bad luck it all happened. But, Frosine, good Frosine, couldn't you help us? You may be sure I will be grateful if you can bring it through. And Marian, you should begin by bringing over your mother to our side. Ah, there is a great deal to be done before we

can break off this marriage! Try her with every little coaxing way you have, and I am sure she will refuse you nothing.

Marian. I will do all I can. I will forget nothing.

Harpagon (*aside, and not seen*). Ha! my son kissing the hand of his future stepmother! And his future stepmother not forbidding it! Is there some mystery now under this?

Elise. There is father!

Harpagon. The carriage is ready. You can set out now when you have a mind.

Cleante. As you are not going, father, I will go and take care of them myself.

Harpagon. You will not. You will stop here. They will get on well enough by themselves, and I am wanting you.

(*Elise, Marian, Frosine go out.*

Harpagon. Well, now, as to the stepmother, what do you think of her?

Cleante. What do I think of her?

Harpagon. Just so; of her carriage and her figure, and her looks and her wit?

Cleante. Middling ——

Harpagon. Speak out.

Cleante. To say what is true, I did not find her what I had thought her to be. She has a very giddy look; her figure is someway clumsy;

she is no great beauty, and has no great sign of wit. You need not think I am saying this to put you against her, for as stepmothers go, I would as soon have her as another.

Harpagon. But for all that you were saying to her ——

Cleante. I said some civil things to her in your name, but that was to please yourself.

Harpagon. And you have no thought of her yourself ?

Cleante. Is it I ? Not at all.

Harpagon. That is a pity, for it puts an end to a notion had come into my head. Seeing her here, I began thinking on my age, and that I would be blamed for marrying so young a girl. That drove me to give up the intention, but as I have asked her and given my promise, I would have given her to you, if you were not so much against her.

Cleante. To me ?

Harpagon. To you.

Cleante. In marriage ?

Harpagon. In marriage ?

Cleante. Listen now. If she is not exactly to my taste itself, I will make up my mind to marry her to oblige you.

Harpagon. I am not so unreasonable as you may think. I am not for forcing you.

Cleante. Oh not at all, but I will force myself for your sake.

Harpagon. No, no! There can be no happy marriage where there is no liking.

Cleante. That is a thing might come after. They say that is what often happens in marriage.

Harpagon. No, a man must not go to that risk. I will not put you in the way of vexations. If you had felt anyway inclined for her, very good, I would have given you to her in my place. But as you do not, I will go on with my first plan and marry her myself.

Cleante. Well, if that is so, I must tell my secret. I have my heart set on her ever since I saw her walking out one day. I was going to ask your consent, and nothing kept me back but hearing what you had in your own mind, and the fear I had of displeasing you.

Harpagon. Did you go to call on her?

Cleante. I did.

Harpagon. Often?

Cleante. Often enough for the shortness of the time.

Harpagon. Did they give you a good welcome?

Cleante. Good enough, but without knowing who I was.

Harpagon. Did you tell her you wanted to marry her ?

Cleante. To be sure I did. I went so far as to give some hints to the mother.

Harpagon. Did she give an ear to them ?

Cleante. She did ; she was very nice.

Harpagon. Did the daughter return your liking ?

Cleante. If one can put belief in appearances, I think she has some liking for me.

Harpagon (*aside.* I am well content to have learned their secret. That is just what I was wanting to know). Now, young fellow, do you know what you have to do ? You will set your mind, if you please, to getting rid of your love-thoughts. You will stop your pursuit of a girl that is meant for myself, and you will marry with no delay the person I have laid out for you.

Cleante. Is that the way you have been playing on me ? Well as things have gone so far, I declare to you that I will not give up Marian ; that there is no length I will not go to get her from you ; and that if you have her mother on your side, I have maybe some one that is as good upon my own.

Harpagon. What are you saying ? You are daring to cross my path ?

Cleante. It is you are crossing my own path. I have the first claim.

Harpagon. Amn't I your father? Do you owe me no respect?

Cleante. This is not a case where I can give in to my father! Love cares nothing for fathers!

Harpagon. I'll make you care for me with a few blows of a stick.

Cleante. Your threats are nothing at all to me!

Harpagon. Will you give her up?

Cleante. I will not.

Harpagon. Let somebody bring me a stick!

(*Jacques comes in.*

Jacques. What is it, gentlemen! What are you thinking about?

Cleante. Much I care for your stick!

Jacques (*to Cleante*). Oh, gently, sir!

Harpagon. To give me such daring talk!

Jacques (*to Harpagon*). O, for mercy's sake!

Cleante. I won't give in!

Jacques. What! To your father!

Harpagon. Leave me alone!

Jacques (*to Harpagon*). Is it your own son! Let you stop now!

Harpagon. I will make yourself judge, Jacques, till you'll see I am in the right.

Jacques. I am willing. (*To Cleante.*) Move a little farther off.

Harpagon. I have taken a fancy to a girl, and I'm going to marry her, and this brat has the impudence to fancy her for himself, and to ask to get her in spite of me refusing.

Jacques. Oh, he is wrong doing that.

Harpagon. Isn't it a terrible thing a son to go into competition with his father? Hasn't he a right, through respect, to keep himself from interfering with my wishes?

Jacques. That is so indeed. Let me speak to him. Stop you where you are.

Cleante (*to Jacques, who comes to him*). As he has chosen you for judge, I agree to it. You will do as well as another. I am willing to put our quarrel before you.

Jacques. That is a great honour for me indeed.

Cleante. I want to marry a young lady, and she wants to marry me, and my father comes in to meddle between us, wanting her for himself.

Jacques. He is wrong doing that.

Cleante. Has he no shame, thinking to marry at his age? Is it suitable to him to go courting? Can't he leave that trade to the young?

Jacques. You are in the right. He is only

joking. Wait till I say a couple of words to him. (*To Harpagon*). Well, sir, your son is not so unreasonable as you might think. He says he knows he owes you respect, and that he was carried away by the heat of his anger. He will not refuse to give in to anything you will say, so long as you will treat him better than what you do, and give him a wife that will be pleasing to him.

Harpagon. Tell him, so that he may expect good treatment from me, and I will give him leave to make his choice of any woman he will pick out, except Marian.

Jacques. That will do. (*To Cleante*). Well now, your father is not so bad as you make him out. He is after telling me that it was you showing so much temper that put him out. He says he will be content to give you all you wish, so long as you will show such behaviour as a son should do.

Cleante. Oh, Jacques, tell him if he will but give up Marian to me he will never have reason to complain of me, and I never will go against him in anything.

Jacques (*to Harpagon*). I have that settled. He is satisfied with what you say.

Harpagon. That is the best news you could bring me.

Jacques (*to Cleante*). There is no more trouble. He is well content with your promises.

Cleante. The Lord be praised for that.

Jacques. The two of you have but to talk the business over together. You are of the one mind now, and you going to quarrel through a mistake a while ago.

Cleante. My poor Jacques, I will be thankful to you through the whole of my life-time.

Jacques. It is nothing at all, sir.

Harpagon. You have done well, Jacques, and you are deserving of a reward. (*He feels in his pockets. Jacques holds out his hand, but Harpagon pulls out a handkerchief*). You can go now. I tell you I will not forget it to you.

Jacques. It's nothing at all, sir.

Cleante. I beg your pardon, father, for losing my temper the way I did.

Harpagon. It dosn't signify.

Cleante. I am as sorry as can be.

Harpagon. And I am as glad as can be, to see you getting sense.

Cleante. You are very kind, forgetting my bad behaviour.

Harpagon. It is easy forgetting it the time you are come back to your duty.

Cleante. And you have no bad feeling against me for the flighty things I said ?

Harpagon. Why would I, and you after giving in as you have done.

Cleante. I will surely remember your kindness the longest day I live.

Harpagon. There is surely nothing at all you will not get from me.

Cleante. Oh I am not asking that. You have done enough for me, giving me Marian.

Harpagon. Who is talking about giving you Marian?

Cleante. Yourself, father.

Harpagon. Myself?

Cleante. To be sure.

Harpagon. What do you say? It is yourself promised to give her up!

Cleante. I promised to give her up!

Harpagon. Just so.

Cleante. Not at all.

Harpagon. And you havn't given up thinking of her?

Cleante. Not at all. My mind is more set on her than ever.

Harpagon. Are you at it again, you villain?

Cleante. Nothing can change me.

Harpagon. Let me at you!

Cleante. Do what you like.

Harpagon. I forbid you ever to see her.

Cleante. The sooner the better.

Harpagon. I give you up.

Cleante. Do so.

Harpagon. I cast you out as a son!

Cleante. Cast away!

Harpagon. I disinherit you!

Cleante. You can if you like.

Harpagon. I give you my curse!

Cleante. Little I care for your gifts!

(*Harpagon goes. La Fleche comes out of garden with a box in his hands.*

La Fleche. Oh, sir, what luck I found you! Follow after me quick!

Cleante. What is it?

La Fleche. What is it? Follow me, I tell you. It's all right!

Cleante. How is that?

La Fleche. Here it is for you!

Cleante. What is it?

La Fleche. I had my eye on this all through the day!

Cleante. What is it at all?

La Fleche. Your father's treasure that I have brought away.

Cleante. How did you do that?

La Fleche. I'll tell you. Let us make off! I hear him crying out!

Harpagon (*crying "stop thief" before he appears, and coming in without his hat*) Stop

thief! stop thief! Robbers! Murderers! I ask justice from heaven! I am destroyed! I have met with my death! My throat that is cut! They have brought away my money! Who was it? What happened him? Where is he? Where is he hiding? What way can I catch him? Where should I run? Where should I not run? Is he there beyond? Is he here? Who is he? Stop I say (*seizing his own arm*). Give me back my money! Rascal! —— Ah, it's but myself! My mind is tattered; I don't know where I am, or who I am, or what I am doing! My grief, my poor gold, my money, my dear friend! They have taken you from me. Since you are gone I have lost my support, my comforter, my joy! All is at an end for me, and I have nothing left to do in the world. Without you I cannot go on living, I have done with it all. I can do no more, I am dying, I am dead, I am buried! Is there no one at all to bring me to life, giving me back my darling money, or telling me who has it taken? Aye, what do you say? It's nobody? Whoever it was struck the blow, it is well he chose the hour. The very time when I was talking with my traitor of a son. Let me out! I will go in search of justice! I will have all in the house searched and tortured! The maids, the men,

my son, my daughter, and myself! What a crowd! I can't see any one among them that has not a guilty look! Hay? What are you talking about? Are they talking of the thief? What is that noise over there? Is it the robber is there? If you please, if anyone has news of my robber let them tell it out to me! Is it that he's hid there among you? They are all looking at me, they are beginning to laugh. It is easy seen they all have a share in the robbery. Here, police, sergeants, constables, magistrates, judges, gaolers, ropes and hangmen! I will hang the whole world, and if I fail to get back my money, it is myself I will hang at the last!

ACT V.

Harpagon, Officer.

Officer. Let me alone. The Lord be praised I know my trade. It's not to-day I began thief catching. I wish I had a sack of money for every man and woman I have hanged.

Harpagon. All the police should have an interest in taking this business in hand. If they do not get me back my money I will commit themselves.

Officer. We will do all that can be done. How much do you say was in the box ?

Harpagon. Ten thousand crowns in full.

Officer. Ten thousand crowns ?

Harpagon. Ten thousand crowns.

Officer. It was a serious robbery.

Harpagon. There is no punishment could be heavy enough for so great a crime. If this thief gets off, it is the churches themselves will be in danger.

Officer. In what coin was the money ?

Harpagon. Good gold coin, and full weight.

Officer. Who do you suspect of the crime ?

Harpagon. Everyone. I would wish you arrest the whole of the town and the outskirts.

Officer. Mind what I say, it is best not to be scaring people too much in the beginning, but to try can you get some proofs on the quiet, the way you can come down on the thief the better in the end. (*Jacques comes in.*

Jacques (*at the back, turning again to the side he entered by*). I'm coming back! Let them cut his throat for me without delay; let them skin his feet, let them scald him in boiling water and hang him up to the ceiling!

Harpagon (*to Jacques*). Who are you talking of? The thief that robbed me?

Jacques. I am talking of a sucking pig your steward is after sending in. I am going to cook it by a recipe of my own.

Harpagon. It is not a question of sucking pigs! Here is a gentleman you have to talk to about another matter.

Officer. Don't be uneasy. I am not a man to scandalise you. Every thing will be done very quiet.

Jacques. Will this gentleman be at the supper?

Officer. Look here, my man, you must hide nothing from your master.

Jacques. Troth, sir, I'll show what I can do. I will treat you the best way I can.

Harpagon. That's not it at all.

Jacques. If I don't treat you as well as I could wish it is the fault of your grand steward, that has my wings cut with the shears of his economies.

Harpagon. You fool you, we have something to think of besides supper. Give me now some news of my money they have robbed.

Jacques. They have your money stolen ?

Harpagon. They have, and I will get yourself hanged if you don't get it back.

Officer (*to Harpagon*). Leave him alone. I see by the look of him he is an honest man, and that without sending him to gaol he will find out what you want to know. Yes, my friend, if you will but tell it out there will no harm happen you, and your master will give you a good reward. His money has been stolen from him to-day, and you cannot but know something of the matter.

Jacques (*aside*). There is the chance I am wanting, to be avenged on Mr. Steward. Since he came into the house he has been the pet, it is his advice is given heed to, and those blows of a rod he gave me are preying on my heart yet.

Harpagon. What are you mumbling ?

Officer. Leave him to himself. He is going to do as you wish. I am full sure he is an honest man.

Jacques. Well, sir, if you force me to speak out, it is my belief it is your pet steward that did it all.

Harpagon. Valere is it ?

Jacques. That's the man.

Harpagon. He that seemed so faithful !

Jacques. Himself. It is what I believe, it was he robbed you.

Harpagon. Why do you think that ?

Jacques. I think it because I think it.

Officer. But you must tell what proofs you have got.

Harpagon. Did you see him lingering about the place where I had my money hid ?

Jacques. To be sure I did. Where is it it was hid ?

Harpagon. In the garden.

Jacques. That's it. I saw him rambling in the garden. What was the money in ?

Harpagon. In a box.

Jacques. That's it, I saw a box with him.

Harpagon. Tell me what sort of a box was it till I will know was it mine ?

Jacques. What sort was it ?

Harpagon. Yes.

Jacques. It was like —— it was like a box.

Officer. I suppose so. But give a better account till we'll know.

Jacques. It was a large box.

Harpagon. The box they stole from me is but small.

Jacques. Oh yes, it is small if you look at it in that way —— but I call it large for what is in it.

Officer. And what was its colour ?

Jacques. What colour ?

Officer. Just so.

Jacques. It was the colour —— a sort of a colour, can't you give me a word for it ?

Harpagon. Aye ?

Jacques. Wasn't it red ?

Harpagon. No, but grey.

Jacques. Oh yes, grey-red —— that is what I was striving to say.

Harpagon. That is it. There is no doubt at all about it. Take it down now, take down his testimony. My good gracious, who at all can I trust ? I will swear to nothing from this out. In my opinion, after this happening, it is I myself might go robbing myself.

Jacques (*to Harpagon*). Here he is coming in. But mind not to tell him it was I myself found him out ! (*Valere comes in.*

Harpagon. Come here to me and make your confession of the blackest crime, the most horrible villainy that was ever yet committed.

Valere. What do you mean ?

Harpagon. You traitor ! And you not blushing at the thought of your crime !

Valere. What crime are you talking about ?

Harpagon. What crime am I talking about ? As though you did not know it well yourself ! There is no use trying to hide it. It is all found out. I have been told all. Is that the way you rewarded my kindness, getting yourself into my house to betray me, and to play me a trick of the sort !

Valere. As you have found me out, sir, I will not make excuses or deny anything.

Jacques (*aside*). Ha ! Did I guess it and I not knowing !

Valere. I was intending to speak to you, and I was but waiting for a good chance. But as you know all, I will ask you not to be angry, but to listen to my reasons. It is true I have given you cause of offence, but my fault might be forgiven after all.

Harpagon. What's that ! To forgive it ! a trap and a murder of the sort !

Valere. Don't get into a rage please. When you will listen to me you will find out there

is not such great harm done as you make out.

Harpagon. And you bringing away what is nearer to me than the flesh of my body or my blood!

Valere. If it is, it is not come into very bad hands. I am well fit to take care of it and to make up for what I have done.

Harpagon. It is my intention you will do that, and restore to me what you have taken.

Valere. You will be well satisfied there is no injury to your name.

Harpagon. There is no question of my good name! But tell me out now what it was led you to it.

Valere. Oh, sir, can you ask that?

Harpagon. Indeed I can ask it.

Valere. It was a little god that brings an excuse for all he causes to be done, and that is Love.

Harpagon. Love?

Valere. Yes.

Harpagon. That's pretty love indeed! Love of my own gold coin!

Valere. No sir, it was not your riches tempted me, that is not what I had in my eye. I promise I will ask no more of you if you will but leave me what I have.

Harpagon. The devil skelp me if I do! I will not leave it with you! Was there ever heard such impudence, asking to keep all you have robbed!

Valere. Do you call that a theft?

Harpagon. Do I call it a theft? A great treasure of the sort?

Valere. Indeed the greatest of all your treasures! But to give it to me is not to lose it. I ask you to do that, on my knees, and it would be right for you to grant me my asking.

Harpagon. I will do no such thing. What do you mean asking it?

Valere. We have given one another our word never to let ourselves be parted.

Harpagon. A very nice promise indeed, and very funny!

Valere. We have agreed to belong to one another to the end of our life-time.

Harpagon. You will not, for I will hinder you.

Valere. Nothing but death can separate us.

Harpagon. You are very much in love with my money!

Valere. I told you before it is not covetousness led me to do what I have done.

Harpagon. It was Christian charity I suppose led you to bring away my gold. But the law will see me righted!

Valere. You may treat me in any way you will, but you must not put any blame upon your daughter.

Harpagon. I suppose not indeed! It would be a strange thing my daughter to have mixed herself with a crime. But it is what I want to get back, what you have brought away, and let you confess where is your hiding place.

Valere. I have brought nothing away.

Harpagon (*aside*). Oh my dear little box! (*Aloud*). You brought nothing out of the place?

Valere. Nothing at all.

Harpagon. You took nothing at all?

Valere. You are wronging me. I would not have done that no matter how great the flame that was consuming me.

Harpagon. Consuming him for my money box!

Valere. The thought of such modesty!

Harpagon. The modesty of my box!

Valere. Those beautiful eyes!

Harpagon (*aside*). My box has beautiful eyes! He is speaking of it like a lover of his sweetheart.

Valere. Mrs. Claude knows the truth about it all. She can bear witness.

Harpagon. What! My own housekeeper is an accomplice!

Valere. She witnessed our engagement. She knew me to be honest, and she gave me her aid, persuading your daughter to consent.

Harpagon (*aside*). Is it that the fear of the law has set him raving ? (*To Valere.*) What are you talking about my daughter ?

Valere. I am saying I had the work of the world to get over her bashfulness.

Harpagon. Whose bashfulness ?

Valere. Your daughter's. It is only yesterday I brought her so far as to sign a promise of marriage.

Harpagon. My daughter has signed a promise of marriage ?

Valere. She has sir, and I myself have signed it with her.

Harpagon. Good Lord ! Another disgrace !

Jacques (*to Officer*). Take it down, sir, take it down !

Harpagon. Of all the misfortunes ! Oh, I am under troubles ! (*To Officer*). Here now, do according to your office, and write out a warrant against him as a felon and a thief.

Jacques. A felon and a suborner.

Valere. Those are not names I deserve. Wait till you know who I am.

(*Enter Marian, Elise, Frosine.*

Harpagon. Ah, you wicked girl, you are not

deserving of a father like myself! Is this the way you practice the lessons I have taught you? You let yourself take a liking to a common thief, and you make your promises to him without leave from me! But I'll cure you! (*To Elise*). It is four strong walls will keep you within bounds! (*To Valere*). It's a rope and a gallows will punish you for daring me!

Valere. It is not you being in a rage will make me guilty. I suppose I am to be allowed to speak before I am convicted.

Harpagon. A gallows did I say? No, but to break you alive on the wheel.

Elise (*on her knees to Harpagon*). Oh, father, take the trouble but to cast a look at him! You are not judging him right, and let me tell you that but for him you would have lost me altogether before this, for it was he saved me the time I was nearly drowned.

Harpagon. That's nothing! It would be better he to have left you to drown than to have done what he has done!

Elise. Oh, father, if you have any affection for me!

Harpagon. No, no, I will listen to nothing! The law must take its course.

Jacques (*aside*). You will be paid out for those blows of a stick.

Frosine. What at all has happened ?

(*Anselme comes in.*

Anselme. What is it, neighbour Harpagon ? You seem to be greatly upset.

Harpagon. Ah, Mr. Anselme, I am the most unfortunate man in the world ! There is nothing but trouble and vexation about this contract you are come to sign. They are doing away with my means ! They are doing away with my good name ! Look there at a traitor, a hound, that has broken all about me, that crept into my house calling himself a serving man, to rob me of my gold and to steal away my daughter's heart ! They have given one another a promise of marriage. That is an insult to yourself, Mr. Anselme. It is you should take up the case against him, and prosecute him at your own expense.

Anselme. It is not my intention to force myself as a husband upon anyone. But I am ready to look on your interest in this matter as the same as my own.

Harpagon. Here is a very honest officer that is well able, as he tells me, to do his duty. (*To the Officer*). Charge him now, as is right, and put down the offence as very criminal.

Valere. I see nothing very criminal in wishing

to marry your daughter. Wait now till you know who I am.

Harpagon. Little I think of such rubbish. There are plenty of schemers going about in these times, giving themselves out as belonging to the high families.

Valere. Take notice now that I am not a man to take anything that does not belong to me. As to my family, all Naples can testify to it.

Anselme. Take care what you are saying. You are speaking before a man that knows all Naples, and that will not be taken in by any story you may make up.

Valere (*putting on his hat proudly*). I am not a man to be afraid of anything, and if you are acquainted with Naples you should know the name of Don Thomas D'Alburci.

Anselme. I know it certainly. There are few who know it better than I.

Harpagon. Little I care for Don Thomas or Don anything else. (*Seeing two candles burning he blows one out*).

Anselme. Let him speak if you please. We shall see what he has to say.

Valere. I have to say he is my father.

Anselme. He ?

Valere. Yes.

Anselme. Stop now, you are talking nonsense.

Listen to me and I will put you down. The man you are talking of was lost at sea sixteen years ago with his wife and children, that he was bringing away from Naples in the troubled time.

Valere. And listen till I put you down. There was one son, seven years old, saved along with a servant by a Spanish ship, and that son is myself that is now speaking with you.

Anselme. But what witnesses have you besides your own word to prove to us that this is not a fable you have built upon a fact ?

Valere. The Spanish Captain for one, and a ruby seal that belonged to my father, an agate bracelet my mother had put upon my arm, and old Pedro, the servant, that was saved with me from the shipwreck.

Marian. I myself can bear witness you are not telling a lie, for all that you tell gives me clear proof that you are my brother.

Valere. You my sister !

Anselme. Oh ! This is a miracle from Heaven ! Come here children into the arms of your father !

Harpagon (*to Anselme*). Is this your son ?

Anselme. He is !

Harpagon. I hold you liable, so, to repay me the ten thousand crowns he has stolen from me.

Anselme. He has stolen from you !

Harpagon. He himself.

Valere. Who made that accusation ?

Harpagon. It was Jacques.

Valere (*to Jacques*). You said that to him ?

Jacques. I am saying nothing at all.

Harpagon. He did say it. The Officer has the deposition taken down.

Valere. Do you think it possible I could do such a thing ?

Harpagon. Possible or not possible, I want back my money.

(*Cleante and La Fleche come in.*

Cleante. Don't be fretting yourself, father and don't be accusing anyone. I have got news of your money. It will be restored to you if you will give me Marian for my wife.

Harpagon. Where is it ?

Cleante. Never mind where it is. I am answerable for it being safe, and all depends on myself. Tell me now, what is your choice ? Will you give me Marian, or will you give up your chance of your cash ?

Harpagon. Is there nothing taken from it ?

Cleante. Nothing at all. Make your mind up now. Her mother leaves her free, will you leave her free ?

Marian (*to Cleante*). There are others to get

consent from. God has given me back my brother (*shows Valere*) and my father (*shows Anselme*).

Anselme. It is not to cross you I have been given back to you. You know well, Harpagon, a girl of her age is more likely to incline to the son than the father. If we have to say more, it may be you would not like to hear it. Give now, as I do, your consent to this double marriage.

Harpagon. I will not till I see my cashbox.

Cleante. You will see it, safe and sound.

Harpagon. I have no fortune to give with either of them.

Anselme. I have enough for them. That need not trouble you.

Harpagon. Will you take on yourself the cost of the two weddings ?

Anselme. I will do that. Are you satisfied ?

Harpagon. I am. So long as you will provide me with a new wedding suit.

Anselme. I agree to that. Come now and we will make the most of this lucky day.

Officer. Hallo, gentlemen ! Wait a while ! Who is going to pay me for making out the warrant ?

Harpagon. We have no use for your warrants.

Officer. I having made it out I must be paid.

Harpagon (*pointing to Jacques*). There is your payment. Take and hang that one.

Jacques. It is not easy to know what to do. First they beat me for telling the truth, and now they are going to hang me for telling a lie.

Anselme. Ah now, you had best let him off.

Harpagon. Let you pay the Officer so.

Anselme. I agree to that. Now children, make haste till we go see your mother.

Harpagon. And I will go see my dear, dear money box!

THE DOCTOR IN SPITE OF HIMSELF

PERSONS

SGANARELLE.	*A Woodcutter.*
MARTHA . .	*His Wife.*
ROBERT . .	*His Neighbour.*
VALERE . .	*Servant of Geronte.*
LUCAS . .	*The same.*
GERONTE .	*Father of Lucy.*
JACQUELINE .	*Nurse at Geronte's, and Wife of Lucas.*
LUCY . . .	*Daughter of Geronte.*
LEANDRE .	*In Love with Lucy.*

THE DOCTOR IN SPITE OF HIMSELF

ACT I.

SCENE: *A cottage kitchen. Sganarelle and Martha come in quarrelling.*

Sganarelle. I tell you I will not do it or any other thing. It is I myself will give out orders, I tell you, and will have the upper hand.

Martha. And I tell you it is I myself will be uppermost! I made no promise the day I married you to put up with your pranks and your tricks.

Sganarelle. Well now, isn't a wife the great torment! Aristotle was surely right the time he said a woman to be worse in the house than the devil!

Martha. Will you look now at this great scholar with his fool talk of an Aristotle!

Sganarelle. So I am, too, a great scholar. Where now would you find any other cutter

of scollops that has as much knowledge as myself? I that served a high-up doctor through the length of six years, and that knew the rudiments and I a young boy.

Martha. Bad 'cess to you. Sure you havn't the sense of an ass!

Sganarelle. Bad 'cess to yourself!

Martha. It was a bad day and hour for me that brought me into your house!

Sganarelle. A bad end indeed to them that made the match!

Martha. You look well making that complaint! It is thanking God every minute of your life you should be for getting the like of myself for a wife. It is little you deserved it!

Sganarelle. Oh, to be sure, I didn't deserve such a great honour at all! I have my own story to tell of the way you behaved from then until now! Believe me, it was well for you to get me.

Martha. Well for me to get you, is it? A man that is bringing me to the poorhouse. A schemer, a traitor, that is eating up all I have!

Sganarelle. That is a lie you are telling. I drink some of it.

Martha. Selling, bit by bit, everything that is in the house.

Sganarelle. Sure that is living on one's property.

Martha. That has taken my bed from under me!

Sganarelle. You will get up the earlier.

Martha. That has made away with the furniture ——

Sganarelle. We have the more room in the house.

Martha. That is drinking and card playing night and morning ——

Sganarelle. To keep myself from fretting.

Martha. And what now would you have me do with the children?

Sganarelle. Please yourself in that.

Martha. The weight of four little one-eens on my shoulders!

Sganarelle. Leave them down on the floor!

Martha. And they crying to me for food ——

Sganarelle. Give them a taste of the stick!

Martha. Is it this way you will be going on for ever, you sot?

Sganarelle. Be easy now, if you please.

Martha. Am I to put up with your abuse and your scattering?

Sganarelle. Don't now be letting us get into a passion!

Martha. What way at all can I make you behave yourself ?

Sganarelle. Mind what you say ! If my temper is not good my arm is good !

Martha. I am not in dread of your threats.

Sganarelle. Oh, my sky-woman, you are wanting to coax something out of me !

Martha. Do you think I give heed to what you're saying ?

Sganarelle. My Helen, my Venus, I'll pull your ears for you.

Martha. You drunken vagabond !

Sganarelle. I'll give you a welting.

Martha. You sneaking tippler !

Sganarelle. A good thrashing ——

Martha. You ruffian you !

Sganarelle. Let me at you !

Martha. You good for nothing villain ! You traitor, you thief, you coward, you scoundrel, you rascal, you cheat, you whelp, you informer, you backbiter, you rogue of ill-luck !

Sganarelle (*taking up a stick and beating her*). If you have your mind set on it, here it is for you !

Martha. Oh, oh, oh, oh !

(*Robert, a man of the neighbours, comes in.*

Robert. Hallo, hallo, hallo ! What is this ? For shame, for shame. Misfortune on the man that is mistreating his wife !

Martha (*flies at Robert, drives him round the stage and at last. gives him a box on the ear*). I say he is welcome to beat me!

Robert. Let him do it so, and I'm satisfied.

Martha. What call have you to come meddling here ?

Robert. I wish I didn't come.

Martha. What business is it of yours ?

Robert. None at all.

Martha. Look at him now, the impudent meddler, trying to hinder a husband from beating his own wife!

Robert. I'll hinder him no more.

Martha. What have you to say now ?

Robert. Nothing at all.

Martha. Why would you be thrusting in your face. ?

Robert. You may say so.

Martha. Mind your own business.

Robert. I'll say no more.

Martha. It's my own wish to be beaten.

Robert. I'm not against it.

Martha. It is not you will pay for it.

Robert. That is so.

Martha. It is a fool that comes meddling where he is not wanted.

Robert (*to Sganarelle*). I ask your pardon, neighbour, for interfering. Go on, thrash

your wife. If you wish it I will give you a hand.

Sganarelle. I don't want your help.

Robert. All right so.

Sganarelle. I'll beat her when I have a mind, and when I have a mind I'll let her alone.

Robert. Very well, very well.

Sganarelle. She is my wife and not yours.

Robert. That's the truth.

Sganarelle. It's not for you to be giving me orders.

Robert. I suppose not.

Sganarelle. I can do without your help.

Robert. I'm satisfied so.

Sganarelle. What impudence you have with your interfering! It is what Cicero says: "Do not thrust in your finger between the tree and the bark." (*He attacks Robert with his stick and drives him out*). (*To Martha*) Here now, we'll make it up.

Martha. I will not make it up after the way you treated me.

Sganarelle. That's nothing at all. Come here now.

Martha. I will not.

Sganarelle. Aye ?

Martha. I won't.

Sganarelle. Come on now, there's the good woman.

Martha. I tell you I will not.

Sganarelle. Do now as I ask you.

Martha. I will not.

Sganarelle. Come on now, come.

Martha. I am rightly vexed this time.

Sganarelle. Sure it was nothing at all.

Martha. Let me alone.

Sganarelle. Give me the hand now.

Martha. I will not after the way you treated me.

Sganarelle. Well, sure I ask your pardon. Give me the hand.

Martha. Well, I never. (*Aside*) But I'll make you pay for it!

Sganarelle. You would be foolish now to be giving heed to a thing of the sort. Sure there are no friends but of a falling out some time. There is nothing so preserve friendship like a few blows of a stick. Well, I'll be going to the wood. Wait till you see all the scollops I will cut on this day. (*He goes out.*)

Martha (*alone*). My joy go with you! It is long before I'll forget to you the way you are after beating me, although I may let on to forget it. It is no common punishment I will be satisfied to put on him this time, but a

punishment he will renmber the longest day he lives.

([illegible]ter Valere and Lucas.

Lucas (*to Valere, with[illegible]t seeing Martha*). In my opinion it is a queer [illegible]ort of a search we are sent on, and it is little [illegible]rofit we are likely to get of it.

Valere. What can we do ? Sure we must obey our master. And [illegible] that wasn't so itself, we must be sorry to se[illegible] the poor young lady the way she is —— for [illegible]ill she gets well there can be no wedding, an[illegible] that wedding should bring in something to [illegible]urselves. It is likely Horace will be the [illegible]d, and he is known to be a generous man. [illegible]ere are some say she had her mind set on [illegible]dne Leandre, but the master never would be [illegible]illing to take *him* for a son-in-law.

Martha. Whatever hap[illegible] I will pay him out. Those blows are s[illegible] [illegible] I feel them yet. (*Stumbling aga*[illegible] *Lucas*). I ask your pardon, gentle[illegible] [illegible]ld not take notice of you. I had m[illegible] taken up with something that was ann[illegible]ying me.

Valere. There is no [illegible]e but has trouble in this world. We ourse[illegible]ves are going about looking for a thing we [illegible]ould be glad to meet with.

Martha. Maybe it is somet' a I could help you to find ? th

Valere. May be so. It ver at we are in search of, some good docto ht he skilful man, that might give relief to o Ster's daughter that has lost the talk wi ell th sickness that has come upon her. Docto a doctors she has had, but they could do noth g at all for her. Now there are men to be ound sometimes that can do great cures wit some secret remedy of their own. That is the ort of a man we are seeking out.

Martha (*to herself*). The Lord has sent me a way to get my revenge on that r cal of mine! (*To them*). You could never have ound anyone better than myself to put you in the way of getting the thing you want. The e is a doctor in this place is the best hand in the world at curing the worst of diseases.

Valere. Is that so ? But wher can we find him ?

Martha. You will find him in t at little wood there beyond, amusing himself. He is cutting scollops.

Lucas. A doctor to be cutting scollops ?

Valere. I suppose you mean h is gathering herbs.

Martha. Not at all. He is a q eer sort of a

man, he take s amusement that way. Full of cranks an cies he is —— you would never take hi e a doctor at all, by his dress or by his way metimes he will let on to be ignorant, the ou would think he was in dread to use it and his knowledge, and they so great hey are.

Valere. It is a strange thing indeed the way the greatest of men will have some grain of folly mixed up with all their learning.

Martha. You never met so contrary a man as this one. It sometimes happens he will let himself be beaten before he will own to being a doctor at all. It is likely you will have to take a stick to him before he will own to it. That is what we ourselves are used to do when we have occasion for him.

Valere. That is great foolishness in him indeed.

Martha. If it is, it's true. But when you have him well beaten he will do wonders.

Valere. What now is his name ?

Martha. Sganarelle his name is. You will know him easy enough, a black beard he has, and a frilled collar and a green and yellow coat.

Lucas. A green and yellow coat ! It is a parrot doctor he has a right to be.

Valere. But tell me now, is it surely true he is as clever as what you say.

Martha. I tell you he is a man that does wonders. It is not six months since there was a woman that was given over by all the other doctors. Dead they thought her to be through the length of six hours. Stretched out for her burying she was. Well this doctor we are speaking of was brought in, and when he saw her he put a little drop out of a bottle into her mouth, and she rose up from her bed on the moment and went about the room as if nothing had happened.

Lucas. Do you tell me so !

Valere. That drop he gave her was surely worth gold.

Martha. About three weeks ago there was a little lad fell down from the top of a tower. All broken and destroyed he was, his head and his arms and his legs. They brought this man we are speaking of to him then, and he rubbed the whole of his body with an ointment he has the secret of, and with that the little lad stood up on his two feet, and away with him to play pitch and toss.

Lucas. Is that a fact now ?

Valere. This man must have a cure for everything.

Martha. So he has, too.

Lucas. That is the sort of a man we

are in search of. Let us go now and find him.

Valere. We are thankful to you, ma'am, for what you have done for us.

Martha. Don't forget now the advice I gave you.

Lucas. We will not. If it is but a few blows of a stick he is wanting, we are sure of him.

Valere (*to Lucas*). We had great luck in meeting with this woman. I have good hopes now our journey will not go for nothing.

SCENE II.: *A Wood. Valere and Lucas. Sganarelle heard singing.*

Valere. I hear some person singing —— and cutting wood.

Sganarelle (*comes in without seeing them. Has a bottle in his hand*). La ——— la —— la —— Faith I have worked hard enough. It is well I have earned a drop. (*Drinks.*) It is very dry work to be cutting timber. (*Sings.*)

O little bottle of my heart,
  Apple of every eye!
All the world would envy me
  If you were never dry!

There's many a lad and lass is dead,
I'll cry them bye and bye.
Its little I need think of them
Until the bottle's dry !

Well there's no use in fretting.

Valere. That is the man himself.

Lucas. It is likely it is. We had luck to chance upon him.

Valere. Wait till we take a nearer view of him.

Sganarelle hugs his bottle, then seeing them watching him, lowers his voice). Ah ! my little rogue of a comrade, it is yourself is my treasure !

All the world would envy me
If you were never dry !

(*Seeing them look closer at him*). What the mischief are these wanting ?

Valere. It is himself surely.

Lucas. He answers to what she told us, anyway.

(*Sganarelle puts down bottle on the ground. Valere bows to salute him, and he thinking it is with a design to take it away puts it on the other side. Lucas also bowing, Sganarelle takes it up again and holds*

it close to his body, which makes "un jeu de theatre."

Sganarelle. They are whispering with one another, they are looking very hard at myself. What plan are they making up, I wonder ?

Valere. Is it you now, sir, that is called Sganarelle ?

Sganarelle. Aye ? What's that ?

Valere. I am asking is your name Sganarelle.

Sganarelle (*turning towards Valere, then towards Lucas*). It is and it is not, according to what you want with him.

Valere. All we want is to show him all the civility we can.

Sganarelle. If that is so, my name is Sganarelle.

Valere. It is well pleased we are to see you, sir. We were sent looking for you to ask your help about a thing we are in need of.

Sganarelle. If it is anything that belongs to my little business I will give it, and welcome.

Valere. You are too good to us, indeed. Put on your hat if you please. The sun might be too strong for you.

Lucas. Do so, sir, cover your head.

Sganarelle (*aside*). What great manners they have !

Valere. Do not be wondering now we two

have come to you. People that are gifted are always in demand, and we heard a great account of you.

Sganarelle. So you might too. I am the best man in the world at cutting scollops.

Valere. Ah now, sir!

Sganarelle. I don't spare myself at all. Cutting and sorting them, the way no one can find any fault.

Valere. That is not what we are talking about.

Sganarelle. But I sell them at no less than fivepence the hundred.

Valere. Don't be talking of that now, if you please.

Sganarelle. I tell you I cannot give them for less.

Valere. We know all about that, sir.

Sganarelle. Then if you know all about it you know I get that much for them.

Valere. It is joking you are, sir —— but ——

Sganarelle. It is not joking I am, I will take no less.

Valere. Leave talking this way now if you please.

Sganarelle. You might get them cheaper from some other one. There are scollops and scollops, but for those that I cut ——

Valere. Let us leave talking of scollops.

Sganarelle. I give you my word you wont get them for one farthing under what I say.

Valere. Be ashamed now.

Sganarelle. Upon my word you will pay that much. It is the truth I am speaking. I am not one to be asking what is not fair.

Valere. Look now, sir, is it right for a man like yourself to be playing tricks and to be letting himself down with this sort of talk. Is it right for a man of learning and a great doctor like yourself to be hiding himself away from the world with all his skill and his knowledge.

Sganarelle (*aside*). The man is surely cracked.

Valere. Don't be humbugging us now, if you please.

Sganarelle. What are you talking about ?

Valere. All this is but letting on. I know more than what you think.

Sganarelle. What is it you know ? Who is it you are taking me for ?

Valere. For what you are, and that is a great doctor.

Sganarelle. Doctor yourself ! I am not one, and I never was one.

Valere (*aside*). This is the foolishness he puts on. (*To him*). Do not be denying the truth, sir, it would be a pity were we to be

forced to do a thing which would be displeasing to you.

Sganarelle. What thing is that ?

Valere. A thing we would be sorry to do.

Sganarelle. What do I care what you may do ? I am no doctor, and I don't understand what you are saying.

Valere (*aside*). We must try the cure on him. (*To him*) Look-at here, sir, I will give you another chance to own to be what you are.

Lucas. Do not be humbugging any more, but confess straight and fair that you are a doctor.

Sganarelle. I am getting vexed.

Valere. Where is the use of hiding what we know ?

Lucas. Why would you be making pretences ? What good will it do you ?

Sganarelle. Look here now, one word is as good as ten thousand. I tell you I am no doctor.

Valere. You are no doctor ?

Sganarelle. I am not.

Lucas. You are not you say ?

Sganarelle. No, I tell you.

Valere. Since you will have it, we must do as we can.

(*Each takes a big stick and they beat him.*

Sganarelle. Ah, ah, ah! I am anything you like!

Valere. Why did you force us to this, sir?

Lucas. Why did you give us the trouble of beating you?

Valere. Believe me, I was loth to do it.

Lucas. Faith I was sorry myself, and very sorry

Sganarelle. What the devil are you saying? Is it joking you are, or is it mad you both are, that you will have me to be a doctor?

Valere. Will you not give in yet? Are you denying yet that you are a doctor?

Sganarelle. May the devil take me if I am.

Lucas. It is not true so that you understand physic?

Sganarelle. That I may die if I do! (*They begin to beat him.*) Stop, stop! O yes, if you will have it so I am a doctor, a doctor I say, and an apothecary if you wish it along with that. I would sooner agree to anything than be clouted on the head.

Valere. That is right now. I am well pleased to see you listen to reason.

Lucas. I am well satisfied now when you talk like that.

Valere. I ask your pardon from the bottom of my soul.

Lucas. Will you forgive me, sir, for making so free ?

Sganarelle (*aside*). Is it true it is ? Was I deceiving myself ? Was I turned into a doctor and never knowing it till now ?

Valere. Believe me you will never repent of confessing to the truth. You will be well satisfied that you did it.

Sganarelle. But tell me now, isn't it you yourselves might be under a mistake ? Is it quite sure I am a doctor ?

Lucas. Sure and certain.

Sganarelle. Is that so ?

Valere. No doubt at all of it.

Sganarelle. And I without knowing it !

Valere. What are you talking about ? You are the greatest doctor in the world.

Sganarelle. Am I, indeed ?

Lucas. A doctor that has cured a great deal of sick people.

Sganarelle. The Lord save us !

Valere. A woman was thought to be dead for six hours. They were ready to bury her, when with one drop of a cure you brought her to life again and set her walking about the room.

Sganarelle. The deuce I did !

Lucas. A little lad of twelve years that fell from the top of a tower you cured. With an

ointment you did it, putting it on his head and his legs and his arms that were broken, till he rose up on his feet and went playing pitch and toss.

Sganarelle. I did that too!

Valere. So you may as well be content to go with us. You will get great gains if you will come where we will bring you.

Sganarelle. Great gains is it?

Valere. That is what I said.

Sganarelle. Then I am a doctor and no mistake. I had forgotten it for a while, but I remember it now. What is the matter? Where must I go?

Valere. We will bring you there. You have to see a young lady that has lost her talk.

Sganarelle. Faith I have not found it!

Valere (*aside*). He likes to be funning. Come on now, sir.

Sganarelle. Without a doctor's suit?

Valere. We will get you one.

Sganarelle (*offering his bottle to Valere*). You may carry that. It is in that bottle I keep my physic. Now, march, walk on, by the doctor's orders!

Lucas. A very pleasant man. It is my opinion he will do the job.

ACT II.

SCENE I. : *A Room in Geronte's House. Geronte, Valere, Lucas.*

Valere. Believe me, sir, you will be satisfied and well satisfied. The doctor we have brought you is the best on the whole ridge of the world.

Lucas. You may say that ! All the rest put together are not fit to clean his boots for him.

Valere. A man he is that has done wonderful cures.

Lucas. He has brought back to life some that were dead.

Valere. Some queer ways he has, as I was telling you. There are times when his wits would seem to be gone from him, the way you would never believe him to be the thing that he is.

Lucas. Playing he does be at foolishness, that anyone nearly would take him to be cracked.

Valere And he having great knowledge all the time. Very high talk he does be giving out now and again.

Lucas. So he does too, for all the world as if he was saying it out of a book.

Valere. He has a great name in every place. There are people coming to him from far and near.

Geronte. I am longing to see him. Bring him here at once.

Valere. I will go call him.

(*Enter Jacqueline.*

Jacqueline. It is my belief, sir, this doctor will do no more than the rest of them, no worse and no better. In my opinion the best doctor you can give Miss Lucy is a good handsome husband that is to her liking.

Geronte. Be quiet, nurse. You are too fond of meddling.

Lucas. Hold your tongue now, wife Jacqueline. Let you not come pushing yourself here.

Jacqueline. I tell you, Lucas, and I tell the two of you, that all these doctors will do her no more good than a drink of water. It is something more than rhubarb and senna the child wants. Believe me, a good husband is the best cure for any young girl.

Geronte. Who would take charge of her in the state she is in now ? And when I wanted her to marry she would not listen to me.

Jacqueline. That is so. But you were

wanting her to marry a man she had no liking for Why didn't you let her marry that young Mr. Leandre that she had her heart fixed on ? I'll engage she'd have obeyed you that time quick enough. I'll tell you more again, she would take him now if she did but get the chance.

Geronte. Leandre is no match for her. He is not well off like the other.

Jacqueline. He has an uncle that is well off. It is he will be the heir.

Geronte. These tales of riches to come are all on the breeze. Those who are waiting for a funeral feast may have plenty of time to go hungry.

Jacqueline. It is what I often heard said, that in marriage, as in many another thing, contentment is better than riches. Fathers and mothers have a bad habit, asking always "How much has he got ?" "How much has she got ?" Look at the way old Peter went marrying his daughter to that Thomas, just because he had a couple of acres more of a garden than the boy she had set her mind on ; and the poor thing is not the better of it now, but is turned as yellow as yellow. What do you say to that, sir? Everyone must have their own pleasure at one time or another. I'd

sooner give a girl her choice man than all the money that is in the bank.

Geronte. That will do, nurse, give your tongue a rest, or you will talk yourself into trouble.

Lucas (*striking her on the shoulder at every sentence*). Come now —— be easy —— It is too free you are making with the master. Let you go rock the cradle, and let him take his own way. Sure the master will do what is best for her —— isn't she his own ? (*pushes her away*).

Geronte. Gently, gently.

Lucas (*again striking her on the shoulder*). It is some sort of a lesson I must give her, sir. I must teach her the way to behave herself before you.

Geronte. Yes, yes, but you need not go quite so far.

Valere (*coming in*). Here he is coming, sir. Here is our doctor.

(*Enter Sganarelle.*

Geronte. I am very happy, sir, to see you at my house. We were very much in need of you

Sganarelle. Hippocrates says: "Let us both be covered."

Geronte. Does Hippocrates say that ?

Sganarelle. He does.

Geronte. In what chapter may I ask ?

Sganarelle. In his chapter —— upon hats.

Geronte. Since Hippocrates says it, it must be done

Sganarelle. Well, doctor, having heard of the wonderful things ——

Geronte. To whom are you speaking if you please ?

Sganarelle. To yourself.

Geronte But I am not a doctor.

Sganarelle. What is that ? You are not a doctor ?

Geronte. No indeed.

Sganarelle (*taking a stick and beating Geronte as he had been beaten*). Do you mean that ?

Geronte. I do mean it Ah, ah, ah !

Sganarelle. You are a doctor now. That is all the licence I myself got.

Geronte. What devil of a man have you brought me ?

Valere. I told you, sir, he was apt to be humbugging.

Valere. I will send him about his business with his humbugging !

Lucas. O don't give heed to it, sir. It was only a sort of a joke.

Geronte. I do not like this sort of joking.

Sganarelle. I ask pardon, sir, for the liberty I have taken.

Geronte. Do not mention it, sir.

Sganarelle. I am sorry.

Geronte. O, it is nothing at all.

Sganarelle. For the blows ——

Geronte. There is no harm done.

Sganarelle. That I have had the honour to give you.

Geronte. You need not waste time talking of that. I have a daughter who is suffering from a very strange disease.

Sganarelle. I am well pleased, sir, to think your daughter has occasion for me. Indeed I wish that you yourself and your whole family had occasion for me along with her, till I would show the desire I have to serve you.

Geronte. I am much obliged for your good wishes.

Sganarelle. Believe me, it is in earnest I am.

Geronte. You do me too much honour.

Sganarelle. What now is your daughter's name ?

Geronte. Lucy.

Sganarelle. Lucy ! That now is a very nice name for a patient to have.

Geronte. I will go and see what she is doing.

Sganarelle. Who is that fine young woman there ?

Geronte. She is nurse to a young child of mine. (*Goes out.*)

Lucas. She is, and she is wife to myself.

Sganarelle. Ah ! that is a very nice looking woman now to have in the house (*takes her hand.*) If there is anything at all I can do for you, tell me at any time and I will do it.

Lucas. Now, doctor, if you please, leave talking to my wife.

Sganarelle. Oh, she is your wife, is she ?

Lucas. She is so.

Sganarelle. Well, I wish her joy of so good a man, and I wish yourself joy of so handsome a wife, so sensible, so well shaped ——

Lucas. That will do you, doctor. I have no great mind for those sort of compliments.

(*Geronte brings in Lucy.*

Sganarelle. Is this the patient ?

Geronte. Here she is. I have no other daughter, doctor, and if anything should happen to her it would break my heart.

Sganarelle. Nothing will happen her. She cannot die, you know, without a prescription from the doctor.

Geronte. A chair here.

Sganarelle (*sitting between Lucy and Geronte*).

Here is a patient that is no way disagreeable to be looking at. I think a man having good sense would be very well pleased with her.

Geronte. You have made her laugh, sir.

Sganarelle. That is right. When a doctor can make his patient laugh it is the best sign in the world. Now let us hear the case. What is it ails you? Have you a pain in any place?

Lucy (*putting her hands to her mouth, her head, and under her chin*). Han, hi, hon, han.

Sganarelle. What is that?

Lucy (*with the same gestures*). Han, hi, hon, han, hi, hon.

Sganarelle. What is it?

Lucy. Han, hi, hon.

Sganarelle. Han, hi, hon, han, ha. I can't understand what you are saying. What sort of a language at all is this?

Geronte. That is what is wrong with her. She has lost her speech, and we cannot tell why or wherefore. We have had to put off her marriage on account of it.

Sganarelle. Why so?

Geronte. The gentleman she is engaged to wants to see her cured before making his settlements.

Sganarelle. What a fool he must be! I wish

to God my wife had the same disease. It would be long before I would want to cure her.

Geronte. And so, sir, we are looking to you to give her some relief.

Sganarelle. O, you need not put yourself out about it. Tell me this now, does it lie very heavy on her ?

Geronte. It does indeed.

Sganarelle. So much the better. Does she feel much pain ?

Geronte. A great deal.

Sganarelle (*turning to patient*). Give me your wrist. Here now, this pulse tells me that your daughter is dumb.

Geronte. Yes, but I would be glad if you would tell me how it came about.

Sganarelle. Easy enough. It came about because she lost her speech.

Geronte. Yes, yes, but how was it she lost her speech ?

Sganarelle. All our best writers will tell you that loss of speech comes from an impediment in the action of the tongue.

Geronte. Yes, yes, but tell me your theory as to this impediment.

Sganarelle. Aristotle says —— some very fine things about it.

Geronte. That is likely enough.

Sganarelle. That now was a great man!

Geronte. No doubt, no doubt.

Sganarelle. A very great man (*holding up his arm from the elbow.*) He was greater than myself by the length of that. Stop now till we go back to our discourse. It is what I hold to that this impediment to the action of the tongue is caused by certain humours that are called by scholars peccant humours —— peccant you know —— peccant humours; the same as the clouds that are caused by the exhalation of influences that rise up in the region of diseases —— coming as you may say to —— I suppose now you understand Latin?

Geronte. Not a word.

Sganarelle (*getting up, brusquely*). You don't know Latin!

Geronte. Not a word.

Sganarelle (*with enthusiasm*). Cabricias arci thuram, catalamus, singularite nominative, haec musa, the muse, bonus, bona, bonum. Deus sanctus, est-ne oratio latinas? Etiam, yes. Quare? Quia substantive adjectivum concordat in generi, numerum et casus.

Geronte. O, why did I never study Latin!

Jacqueline. Well, now, hasn't he great learning!

Lucas. So he has. It is that great I can't make head or tail of it.

Sganarelle. These vapours now, as I was telling you, in passing from the left side where the liver is to the right side where the heart is, find that the lungs, that we call in Latin, *Armyan*, having communication with the brain, that we call in Greek, *Nasmus*, by means of the hollow vein that we call in Hebrew, *Cubile*, meets in its way the said vapours that fill the ventricles of the omoplate —— and because the said vapours —— listen well now till you understand this —— have a certain malignity —— pay attention now I tell you.

Geronte. Yes, yes.

Sganarelle. Have a certain malignity that is caused by the acrimony of the humours engendered by the concavity of the diaphragm, it happens that these vapours —— ossabandus, niqueis, nequer potarinum, quipsa milus, that now is the very thing that has brought dumbness on your daughter.

Jacqueline. Well that is great talk, and no mistake.

Lucas. I wish I could twist my tongue the like of that.

Geronte. No doubt about it, no one could have reasoned a thing out better. But there is

just one thing that puzzled me —— and that is the position of the liver and of the heart. It seems to me you put them out of their proper places. Is not the heart on the left side, and the liver on the right ?

Sganarelle. That is the way they used to be, but we have changed all that. We practise medicine in quite a different manner in these days.

Geronte. That is what I did not know. You must forgive my ignorance.

Sganarelle. To be sure, to be sure. You are not expected to be as learned as what we doctors are.

Geronte. No, indeed. But tell me now, what should be done to cure her ?

Sganarelle. What do I think should be done ?

Geronte. Just so.

Sganarelle. It is my opinion she should be sent to her bed, and the cure I would recommend her would be a good share of bread that has been soaked in wine.

Geronte. What effect could that have on her ?

Sganarelle. Sure there is some virtue in bread and wine that acts upon the speech. Isn't it what they give to parrots, and don't they learn to speak. ?

Geronte. That is true. What a clever man

he is ! Hurry, hurry, bring in plenty of bread and wine !

Sganarelle. I will come back in the evening to see what way is she going on.

Geronte. Stop, stop a moment !

Sganarelle. What should I stop for ?

Geronte. Well, sir, I should like to offer you a fee.

Sganarelle. I will not take it (*putting his hands behind his back, while Geronte opens his purse*).

Geronte. Sir !

Sganarelle. No, no !

Geronte. Wait one minute.

Sganarelle. I will not.

Geronte. I beg of you.

Sganarelle. You are making a mistake.

Geronte. No, no, it is all right.

Sganarelle. I won't take it !

Geronte. Why not ?

Sganarelle. I don't care to be doing cures for money.

Geronte. I can quite believe that.

Sganarelle (*having taken the money*). Is this now good money ?

Geronte. O, yes it is.

Sganarelle. I am not a doctor that cares for profit !

Geronte. I am sure of that.

Sganarelle. It is not of gain I am thinking.

Geronte. Such a thing never entered my head.

Sganerelle (*alone, looking at the money*). Faith I havn't done so badly after all.

(*Leandre comes in cautiously by opposite door to that by which Geronte has gone out. He comes close to Sganarelle and speaks in a low voice.*

Leandre. I have been waiting on the chance of seeing you, doctor. I have come to ask for your help.

Sganarelle (*feeling his pulse*). A very bad pulse, very bad indeed.

Leandre. There is nothing wrong with my health, sir —— that is not what has brought me.

Sganarelle. If there is nothing ails you, why the mischief couldn't you say so ?

Leandre. I will tell you the whole story in two words. My name is Leandre. I am in love with the young lady you have come to prescribe for. Her father is against me and wont let me see her, and I want you to help me in a plan I have thought out. My life and my happiness depend on my getting a chance of saying a few words to her.

Sganarelle. What do you take me to be ? What are you saying ? How dare you come

asking me to help to make your match! It is a right thing to ask of a doctor?

Leandre. Don't speak so loud, sir.

Sganarelle (*pushing him away*). I will do as I like. What impudence you have!

Leandre. O, be quiet, sir!

Sganarelle. Ah! even a fool should have more sense that that.

Leandre. I beg of you, sir ——

Sganarelle. I will show you I am not that sort of a man. Great impertinence indeed!

Leandre (*taking out a purse and giving it to him*). Sir ——

Sganarelle. Thinking to make use of me —— (*taking the purse*) —— I am not speaking of you at all, sir, you are a real gentleman. Anything I can do for you, I will be well pleased to do it. Thinking I was of some that should know better —— impudent chaps that would not give a man credit for being what he is —— no wonder for me to be put out, thinking of them.

Leandre. I beg your pardon, sir, for taking such a liberty ——

Sganarelle. You are joking now —— but tell what is it you are wanting?

Leandre. Well, sir, I should tell you, this dumbness you have been called in to cure is

not a real disease at all. The doctors have given their opinions on it, they were bound to do that ; one says it comes from the brain, one from the stomach, one from the spleen, one from the liver. But I can tell you the real truth, love is the only cause of it all. Lucy is only pretending to be dumb that she may escape from a marriage they are trying to force her into. —— Just come with me —— they might see us here —— and I will tell you what my plan is.

Sganarelle. Come on then, sir. It is a wonder now what an interest you have given me in your match. Believe me, the young lady will either die, or she will be married to you, as sure as I'm a doctor !

ACT III.

SCENE : *Same as last. Sganarelle, Leandre.*

Leandre. There now, I think I should pass very well for an apothecary. Her father hardly knows me by sight, he will never recognise me in those clothes and this wig.

Sganarelle. No fear at all of it.

Leandre. All I want now is a few good medical terms to bring out when I am speaking, that will give me an air of learning.

Sganarelle. Never mind that. The clothes are sufficient. Sure I know no more of medicine than yourself.

Leandre. What !

Sganarelle. Devil mend me if I know anything at all about it ! You are a gentleman, and I will tell you no lie, as you told me no lie.

Leandre. You are not really a doctor !

Sganarelle. I am not. I tell you they made me a doctor in spite of myself. I never had tried for such great learning as that. All I could do never rose me from the bottom of the school. What it was first put the notion

in their heads I don't know, but so soon as I found they had set their minds on making me a doctor by force, I made up my own mind I would be one at the expense of whoever would meet with me. You would hardly believe now the way the mistake has spread itself, everyone believing me to be a very skilful man. They are coming to consult me from all parts, and if things go on the way they are doing, it is as well for me to stick to doctoring to the end of my life. It seems to me it is the best trade of all, for whether we kill or cure, we must be paid for the job. Bad work is never sent back on our hands, and we have leave to cut the stuff we are working on to our own liking. If a shoemaker, now, should spoil a piece of leather, he must be at the loss of it, but whatever injury we may do to a man, it costs us nothing at all. It is not on us the fault is laid, the fault is with the man that died. Another great advantage there is in our profession, the dead always keep a civil tongue, they are very decent indeed, you will never hear them make a complaint against the doctor that killed them.

Leandre. That is true. The dead keep a very honourable silence upon that point.

(*Geronte comes in.*

Geronte. O, doctor! I was just looking for you.

Sganarelle. How is the young lady getting on ?

Geronte. Rather worse since your prescription.

Sganarelle. That is a good sign. It shows it is working.

Geronte. Yes, but I am afraid that in its working it will choke her.

Sganarelle. Don't be uneasy. I have certain cures against everything, but I delay giving them till the very last.

Geronte. Who is that with you ?

Sganarelle (*making signs with his hands that it is an apothecary*). He is ——

Geronte. What ?

Sganarelle. He is ——

Geronte. Aye ?

Sganarelle. A man who ——

Geronte. I understand you.

Sganarelle. Our daughter will be in need of him.

Jacqueline (*bringing in Lucy*). Here is Miss Lucy, sir. She has taken a fancy to walk about for a while.

Sganarelle. That will serve her. Go now. apothecary, and feel her pulse. I will be consulting you bye and bye about her complaint, (*He takes Geronte into a corner and puts his arm*

round his shoulders to prevent him from turning his head towards Leandre and Lucy.) It is a great question now among doctors, is it easier to cure a woman or a man. Listen to me now if you please. Some say it is, and more say it is not ; but for my part I say it is, and it is not. Because, inasmuch as the incongruity of the opaque humours that meet in the natural temper of women, cause the animal part to gain the mastery of the feelings, we see that the difference in their opinions follows on the sideway motion of the circle of the moon ; and as the sun that darts its rays on the concavity of the earth finds ——

Lucy. You may be quite sure that I can never change my mind.

Geronte. My daughter is speaking ! O, what great power there was in that cure ! What a wonderful doctor ! You can't think how grateful I am ! What can I ever do to repay you ?

Sganarelle (*walking about the stage and fanning himself with his hat*). I have had a great deal of trouble over this illness !

Lucy. Yes father, I have recovered my speech, but I have recovered it to tell you that I will have no other husband than Leandre. It is no use your trying to force anyone else upon me.

Geronte. But ——

Lucy. Nothing can make me change my mind.

Geronte. What ?

Lucy. There is no use in wasting argument upon me.

Geronte. If ——

Lucy. Nothing you can say will make any difference.

Geronte. I ——

Lucy. I have made up my mind.

Geronte. But ——

Lucy. All the fathers in the world could not make me marry against my will.

Geronte. I have ——

Lucy. You may save yourself the trouble

Geronte. If ——

Lucy. My heart will not give in to tyranny.

Geronte. Then ——

Lucy. I would rather go into a convent than marry a man I don't care for.

Geronte. But ——

Lucy (*speaking in a very loud voice*). No, no —— by no means —— not at all. You are wasting time. I will not do it. I have made up my mind !

Geronte. What a rush of words ! There is no stopping her. I must ask you, doctor, to make her dumb again.

Sganarelle. That now is more than I can do. All I can do for you, if you wish it, is to make yourself deaf!

Geronte. I am much obliged to you. (*To Lucy*) Do you think then ——

Lucy. No, no. I don't care for any of your reasons!

Geronte. You shall marry the man I have chosen this very day.

Lucy. No, I would sooner marry death!

Sganarelle. Be quiet, be quiet, and let me prescribe —— I know the cure for whatever is wrong with her.

Geronte. Can you cure the mind as well as the body?

Sganarelle. Leave me alone! I have cures for everything, and the apothecary will be able to give me a hand this time. (*To Leandre*) Here I have a word to say. You see that the liking she has for this young man is quite against her father's wish. There is no time to lose, the symptoms are very acrimonious. It is needful to find some cure for this disease before it gets worse with delay. Now the only cure I can see is a dose of runaway oil, which you will mix as is right with two drachms of matrimonial pills. It is likely she may make some objection to taking this dose, but as you are a

skilful man in your business you will bring her to it, and make her swallow it as well as you can. Go now and take a walk in the garden with her, while I stop talking here with her father. Mind above all that you lose no time, give her the dose and make no delay.

(*Lucy and Leandre go out.*

Geronte. What drugs, doctor, were those you were speaking of? I don't remember having heard of them before.

Sganarelle. Drugs they are that are used in very severe cases.

Geronte. Did you ever hear such insolence as she gave me!

Sganarelle. Young girls are apt to be a bit headstrong.

Geronte. You would not believe how she is set on this fellow Leandre.

Sganarelle. The heat of the blood puts youngsters above themselves.

Geronte. Ever since I found it out I have kept her under my eye.

Sganarelle. You showed good sense doing that.

Geronte. I have taken good care never to let them write to one another.

Sganarelle. You did well.

Geronte. If I had let them see one another, some folly might have come of it.

Sganarelle. So there might, too.

Geronte. I believe she would have run away with him.

Sganarelle. She would sure enough.

Geronte. I am told he has done his best to get a chance of seeing her.

Sganarelle. Great folly, indeed.

Geronte. He is only losing his time.

Sganarelle. Ha, ha !

Geronte. I will take good care he doesn't see her.

Sganarelle. Ah, it is no fool he has to deal with ! It's likely you know tricks he never heard of. Believe me, any person that knows more than what you know is a wise man.

Lucas (*coming in*). What will you say at all, sir ! Did ever anyone hear the like ! Miss Lucy is gone away with Mr. Leandre ! It was he was the apothecary ! And who was it managed the whole trick but that doctor !

Geronte. What are you saying ! What a terrible blow ! Go and call the constables ! Don't let him escape ; O, you rascal, I will give you up to the law !

Lucas. Ah, ha, doctor, do you hear that ! Its hanged you will be ! Stop where you are !

(*Martha comes in.*

Martha. God help us ! All the trouble I had

making out this house. What news have you for me now of the doctor I recommended you ?

Lucas. There he is before you, and he just going to be hanged.

Martha. What are you saying ? My man going to be hanged ! And what is he after doing to deserve that ?

Lucas. It is what he did, he got our master's daughter to be run away with.

Martha. My grief, my dear comrade, is it hanged you are to be ?

Sganarelle. You see the way I am. Ah ——

Martha. And brought to your death with all the crowds looking at you ?

Sganarelle. Sure what can I do ?

Martha. If you had cut all the scollops you had to cut itself, that would be some comfort.

Sganarelle. Go away out of that ! You are breaking my heart !

Martha. I will not. I will stop here to hold up your courage until you die ! I will not leave you till such time as I have seen you hanged.

Sganarelle. Ah !

(*Enter Geronte.*

Geronte. The constables will be here in a minute. They will put you in a place where you will be well minded !

Sganarelle (*on his knees*). Oh, oh, couldn't you be satisfied with a few blows of a stick!

Geronte. No, no! I must give you up to justice —— But what do I see here?

(*Enter Leandre and Lucy*

Leandre. Here, sir, I have brought myself before you, and I have brought Lucy back to you. We had intended to go and be married without your leave, but we think it better to act openly. I don't want to steal her from you, I want you to give her to me. What I have to say is, that letters have just come telling me of the death of my uncle, and that I have come into possession of all he had.

Geronte. You are a worthy man, sir, and I give you my daughter with the greatest pleasure.

Sganarelle (*aside*). Faith, the doctor has come well out of this scrape after all.

Martha. So as you are not to be hanged, you should be thankful to me for being as you are a doctor. It was I did that much for you.

Sganarelle. You did; and you got me a great beating with a stick!

Leandre. You can afford to forget that now, all has turned out so well.

Sganarelle. Very well, so; I will let it pass this time. I will forgive you the chastising I got in consideration of the trade you have

started me in. But mind yourself from this out. Let you remember there is no worse thing to face in the whole world than a doctor's ill-will.

THE ROGUERIES OF SCAPIN

CHARACTERS.

ARGANTE . . *Father of Octave and Zerbinette.*
GERONTE . . *Father of Leandre and Hyacinth.*
OCTAVE . . *Married to Hyacinth.*
LEANDRE . . *In love with Zerbinette.*
ZERBINETTE . *Thought to be a Gipsy.*
HYACINTH . *Wife of Octave.*
SCAPIN . . *Valet to Leandre.*
SILVESTER . . *Valet to Octave.*
NERINE . . *Hyacinth's Nurse.*
CARLE . . . *A Cheat.*
TWO PORTERS.

THE ROGUERIES OF SCAPIN

ACT I.

SCENE: *A Street at Naples.*

Octave. Oh! What news for a lover! What a fix I am in. You say, Silvester, you have just heard at the port that my father has landed from his voyage?

Silvester. Just so.

Octave. And that he is on the point of coming to the house.

Silvester. Just so.

Octave. And that he has made up a match for me?

Silvester. That's it.

Octave. A daughter of Geronte's?

Silvester. Of Mr. Geronte's.

Octave. That they are bringing her from Tarentum?

Silvester. That's what I said.

Octave. And you've this news from my uncle ?

Silvester. From your uncle.

Octave. And my uncle knows all our affairs ?

Silvester. All our affairs.

Octave. Look here now. (*Threatens Silvester.*) Speak or don't speak, but don't go this way, making me drag the words out of your mouth.

Silvester. What have I to say ? You are not forgetting anything. You are telling it all out just as you heard it.

Octave. You might give me some word of advice. Can't you tell me what to do in this crisis ?

Silvester. I am badly off myself. I wish I could find some person to advise me.

Octave. Bad luck to my father's home-coming. What a nuisance it is.

Silvester. So it is to myself.

Octave. When he finds out what has happened I'll never hear the end of it.

Silvester. I wish *I* could get off with no more than abuse. It's worse than that I'm looking out for.

Octave. Good heavens! How am I to get out of this tangle ?

Silvester. You had a right to have thought of that before you got into it.

Octave. Don't worry me to death with your preachings.

Silvester. You are a worse worry to me with your fooleries.

Octave. What am I to do? What can I do? How can I help myself?

(*Scapin comes in.*

Scapin. Well, Master Octave. What's the matter with you? What ails you, you would seem to be some way upset.

Octave. Oh, my good Scapin, I am done for. I am the unluckiest chap in the world.

Scapin. How is that now?

Octave. Haven't you heard the news?

Scapin. I have not.

Octave. My father is come home this morning, and Geronte with him, and they want to make up a match for me.

Scapin. Well, what is there so terrible in that?

Octave. You don't know then why it upsets me so much?

Scapin (*close to Octave*). It's your own fault if I have to go so long without knowing. I am a good comforter. I am always ready to give attention to young gentlemen that are in trouble.

Octave. Oh, Scapin, if you could but think

of any plot or plan to get me out of this fix I would owe you my life and all.

Scapin. I can tell you there are few things I can't succeed in if once I put my hand to them. No doubt at all it is from beyond the world I got the intellect and the wit to do all these feats the ignorant people are apt to call rogueries. I am telling no lie saying there never was any man better than myself for doing jobs of the sort, or that had his name more up for it. But it's little thanks one gets in these hard times, and I've given all up since a little misfortune that happened me.

Octave. What was that ?

Scapin. Just a little falling out I had with the law.

Octave. With the law ?

Scapin. A little disagreement I had with it. Badly treated I was ; and the times being so ungrateful I said I would do no more to help anyone. (*Octave and Silvester start back, disappointed.*) No matter, tell me out your story.

Octave (*coming back quickly to Scapin*). You know, Scapin, that my father and his friend Geronte set out a couple of months ago to see after some business they both have an interest in ?

Scapin. I know that much.

Octave. And that I was left under Silvester's care, and Leandre under yours ?

Scapin. Ay, and well minded he has been.

Octave. Soon after that Leandre met with a young girl among the gipsies, and fell in love with her.

Scapin. I know that too.

Octave. We being friends he told me about it, and took me to see the girl, who I thought good-looking enough, but not so handsome as he would have liked me to think her. He talked about her all day long, and he was ready to quarrel with me for not taking it all more seriously.

Scapin. I don't know yet what this is leading to.

Octave (*puts his hand on Scapin's shoulder*) One day I was going to see her with him, and we heard a great sobbing and crying in a little house we were passing. We asked what it was, and we were told there were some strangers there in a very bad way, and that no one could help pitying them.

Scapin. But what are we coming to, I wonder.

Octave. We looked in and saw an old woman at the point of death, a nurse attending on her, and a girl, the greatest beauty you ever saw, crying her heart out.

Scapin. Ah, ah !

Octave. Anyone else in her place would have looked an object, for she was dressed in a shabby little skirt and jacket, and with untidy hair. But nothing was able to spoil her beauty.

Scapin. I see we are coming to the point.

Octave. If you had seen her, Scapin, as I did, you would have admired her as I did.

Scapin. I'll engage I would. And so I do without seeing her.

Octave. Her tears were not those horrid blobby ones. She had a most engaging way of crying.

Scapin. I understand.

Octave. It was heart-breaking to see the way she clung to the poor woman she was calling mother.

Scapin. Very pretty, indeed. It is easily seen you fell in love with this good daughter.

Octave. Oh, Scapin, a savage would have fallen in love with her.

Scapin. To be sure he would. What way could he help it ?

Octave. When we left the house I asked Leandre what he thought of her, and he said, quite coolly, " Rather pretty." Of course, after that I didn't tell him what I thought of her.

Silvester (*coming between them*). If you don't

shorten this story we'll be here till to-morrow. I'll make a finish of it in two words. (*To Scapin*) The girl was honest, there was nothing for it but marriage, and he has been married to her these three days.

Scapin. I understand.

Silvester (*counting on his fingers*). Now put to that his father coming home before his time, his uncle finding out the secret of his marriage, and the match they have made up for him with Geronte's daughter by his second wife, her that was of Tarentum.

Octave. And add to all that my not having a penny in the world to support a wife on.

Scapin. Is that all? That's a very small thing to be upsetting you. You should be ashamed to be at a loss for a trifle of that sort. What the mischief! You to be as big as father and mother and not to be able to make some plan in your head, some little trick to straighten things for yourself. I wish I had got the chance at your age to have these old heroes to play my game on. I'm the boy that could have done it. I wasn't that height when I could beat the world for tricks.

Silvester. I'm not gifted in the same way at all. I haven't the wit like you to have got into the grip of the law.

Octave. Here comes my wife, my dear Hyacinth.

(*Hyacinth comes in.*

Hyacinth. Oh, Octave, is it true what I hear, that your father has come back and has made a match for you ?

Octave. True, indeed, dear Hyacinth. The news was a great upset to me, but there is a man (*pointing to Scapin*) who could if he likes be the greatest help to us.

Scapin (*coming to Octave*). I have taken my oath often enough to have nothing more to do with the business of this world——but if both of you begged me very hard maybe——.

Octave. Oh, if it's a question of begging you, I beg you with all my heart to take the rudder of our boat.

Scapin. And have you no word to say to me ?

Hyacinth. I beg and pray you in the name of whatever is dearest to you to help us.

Scapin. I suppose I must give in so, and show you some kindness. Well, I'll do my best for you.

Octave. You may be sure——.

Scapin. That'll do (*to Hyacinth*). You may go now, and make yourself easy.

(*Octave gives his hand to Hyacinth and leads her to door.*

Scapin (*to Octave*). You must embolden yourself now before you will meet your father.

Octave. The very thought of meeting him makes me shiver. I am nervous by nature, and I can't get over it.

Scapin. You must speak up to him at the first meeting, or he will think you a child yet for him to be leading by the hand. Learn now a little courage the same as you would learn a lesson. Settle out what way you will give an answer to anything he may say.

Octave. I will do the best I can.

Scapin. Come now, till I practise you. Speak out your part till we'll see do you say it well. Here now——a hardy look——the head up—a straight carriage.

Octave. This way ?

Scapin. That'll do, now let on to yourself that I'm your father, and give me out answers as you would to himself. (*He goes up room, turns round to Octave.*) What's that ? You fool, you dog-boy ! You ill-conditioned idiot ! Would you dare come before me after your behaviour, after the dirty trick you played and my back turned ? Is that the harvest I get for caring for you, you hound ? Is that the respect you show me, the respect that is due to me ? You have the impudence,

you rascal, to go engage yourself without my consent, to make an underhand marriage. Answer me, you villain. Answer me, I say ? Let me hear now your grand excuses——Oh, the deuce take it, have you nothing to say ?

Octave. Because I keep thinking it is my father who is speaking.

Scapin. Just so. And that is the reason you must behave like an innocent !

Octave. I will be all right ; you will see how well I will answer.

Scapin. You are sure of that ?

Octave. Quite sure.

Silvester. Here's your father coming.

Octave. Oh, I say. I am done for. (*Runs out.*)

Scapin (*runs after him*). Hallo, Octave. Stop here, Octave. (*Comes back.*) What a poor creature of a man ! We'll stop here now for the master of the house.

Silvester. What am I to say to him ?

Scapin. Let me speak, and let you do nothing but back me up. (*Argante comes in.*

Argante (*believing himself alone*). Did anyone ever hear of such a thing.

Scapin (*to Silvester*). He is after hearing of it. He can't but talk of it, and he alone.

Argante. Such confounded daring.

Scapin (*to Silvester*). Listen to him.

Argante. I would like to know what they will say to me about this accursed marriage.

Scapin. That is what we are thinking ourselves.

Argante. Will they try to deny it ?

Scapin. No, we won't do that.

Argante. Will they try to make excuses ?

Scapin. That might be a thing to do.

Argante. Will they put me off with fairy tales ?

Scapin. They may.

Argante. All their talk won't help them.

Scapin. We'll see about that.

(*Scapin advances a little towards Argante. Silvester goes behind Argante.*

Argante. They can't take *me* in.

Scapin. I wouldn't swear to it.

Argante. I will shut up that ass of a son of mine in some safe place.

Scapin. We'll see about that.

Argante. As for that rascal Silvester, I will flog the skin off him.

Silvester. It would be a wonder if he forgot me.

Argante (*seeing Silvester*). Ah, ha, there you are, my good trusty man. A good guide you are for the young! (*Lifts his cane to strike*

him. Scapin catches Argante's arm with his left hand.)

Scapin. I'm well pleased to see you coming home, sir.

Argante. How are you, Scapin? (*To Silvester*) You have carried out my orders properly. My son has behaved very well while I was away!

Scapin. I'm glad, and very glad to see you look so well.

Argante. I'm well enough. (*To Silvester*) You are not saying a word, you brute.

Scapin. Did your honour get a good journey?

Argante. Good enough——Can't you leave me to quarrel in peace?

Scapin. You are wishful to quarrel?

Argante. Yes I am.

Scapin. And with who now?

Argante. This blackguard here.

Scapin. Why is that now?

Argante. You haven't heard what has been going on while I was away?

Scapin. I heard talk of some little thing.

Argante. Some little thing! A thing of that sort.

Scapin. You are maybe right.

Argante. Such a daring thing as that!

Scapin. True for you.

Argante. A son to marry without his father's consent!

Scapin. Well, there's something in that. But I'd recommend you, sir, not to be making too much noise about it.

Argante. That's not my opinion. I'll make as much noise as I choose. What? Don't you think I've good cause to be angry?

Scapin. That's so. I was mad out and out myself when I got word of it. I took your side. I went so far as to give your son my opinion. Ask himself what abuse I gave him, and the way I spoke of the disrespect he showed to his father in place of kissing the print of his footstep the way he ought to be. Your honour's self could not have said more than what I did? But where's the use of it? Maybe he didn't behave as badly as you think.

Argante. What are you saying? He didn't behave badly in marrying a girl no one knows anything about?

Scapin. Sure what can you do? What must happen will happen!

Argante. That's a good reason to give. One may commit all the crimes in the world—kill cheat, rob, and say as an excuse that what must happen will happen!

Scapin. Ah! now you are going too deep into

things. All I meant to say is, he got into this business and couldn't get out of it.

Argante. Why should he have got into it ?

Scapin. Well, now would you wish him to be as sensible as yourself ? Youngsters are youngsters, and don't always keep on the straight road. Look at our Leandre now, in spite of all my warnings, all my preachings. He has done worse again than your son. Weren't you yourself young one time, and didn't you play your little pranks the same as the others? (*Argante smiles.*) I heard it said you used to be a terror among the ladies—— Well able to coax them you were.

(*Argante roars with laughter. While he is laughing Scapin and Silvester both go to back.*

Argante. That may be so, but I never went so far.

Scapin (*coming to Argante*). What would you have him to do ? He sees a young girl that fancies him, for he takes after you, in all the women running after him. He is taken with her, makes love to her ; she is no way unwilling. Her people make an outcry and force him to marry her ?

Argante (*going to Silvester*). He was forced to marry her?

Silvester. He was, sir.

Scapin. Is it I to have told you a lie ?

Argante. He should have prosecuted them for intimidation.

Scapin. That is what he would not do.

Argante. That would have made it easier for me to break the marriage.

Scapin. To break it ?

Argante. Certainly.

Scapin. You will not break it.

Argante. I won't break it ?

Scapin. You will not.

Argante. Haven't I the rights of a father on my side, and the threats they used to my son ?

Scapin. That is a thing he will never agree to.

Argante. He won't agree to ?

Scapin. He will not.

Argante. My son ?

Scapin. Your son. Would you have him confess he was in dread, and that they used compulsion and force ? He will never own to that. It would put a disgrace on him, and leave him unworthy of belonging to you.

Argante. I care nothing for that.

Scapin. For his own sake and for your sake he has to say it was of his own free will he married her,

Argante. For my sake and for his own sake I'll make him say the contrary.

Scapin. I'm sure he'll not say that.

Argante. I'll force him to say it.

Scapin. I tell you he will not.

Argante. If he doesn't, I'll disinherit him.

Scapin. You will ?

Argante. I will.

Scapin. Very good.

Argante. How very good ?

Scapin. You will not disinherit him.

Argante. Not disinherit him ?

Scapin. No.

Argante. No ?

Scapin. No.

Argante (*getting angry*). That's a good joke. I'll not disinherit my son ?

Scapin. I say you will not.

Argante. Who will hinder me ?

Scapin. Yourself.

Argante. Myself ?

Scapin. That's it. You will not have the heart to do it.

Argante. I will have the heart.

Scapin. You are making fun now.

Argante. I am not making fun.

Scapin. Fatherly tenderness will gain the day.

Argante. It will do no such thing.

Scapin. It will, it will.

Argante. I tell you it shall be done.

Scapin. Good-morrow to you.

Argante. You must not say "good-morrow to you."

Scapin. Sure I know you well. You are kind by nature.

Argante (*furiously, going towards Scapin, who backs from him*). I am not kind. I am wicked when I have a mind. Have done, you are vexing me with your talk. (*Crosses to Silvester.*) Go, you good-for-nothing. Look for that oaf of mine. I am going to tell Geronte of my misfortune.

(*Silvester goes behind Argante and Scapin.*

Scapin. If I can be helpful to you in any way, sir, you have but to give me orders.

Argante. Thanks (*aside*). It is a hard thing to have one son only. If I had not lost my poor daughter, she would have been my heiress now.

(*Goes out.*

Silvester. You are a great man, surely, and the work is going well, but we must have money to go on with for all that. There are creditors in full cry after us on every side.

Scapin. Leave me alone. I have made my plan. I am searching my mind for some one I can have trust in to personate a man I want

to bring in. Wait a minute——Pull your hat over your eyes like a sort of bully—Rest upon one leg——Clap your hand to your side——Walk like a king you would see in a theatre. (*Silvester marches about.*) That's it. Come with me, I'll make you that your barber wouldn't know you, I know all the ways of disguising the face and the voice.

(*Silvester goes out, followed by Scapin.*

ACT II.

SCENE: *Same as before.*

(*Argante and Geronte come in, leaning on their canes.*

Geronte. Our people will be here to-day with this fine weather. A sailor just come from Tarentum tells me he saw my man on the point of starting. But when my daughter does come she will find everything upside down. That folly of your son's has upset all our plans.

Argante. Don't worry yourself about that. I'll engage to do away with that difficulty. I am going to set about it now. (*He makes a movement towards door. Geronte stops him by speaking.*)

Geronte. Faith, Mr. Argante, do you know what I think? The right bringing up of children takes a great deal of pains.

Argante (*coming near to Geronte*). No doubt about it. But what do you mean by saying that?

Geronte. I say that the bad behaviour of

youngsters generally comes from the bad education their fathers have given them.

Argante. That is so sometimes. But what are you driving at ?

Geronte. What am I driving at ?

Argante. Yes.

Geronte. If you had brought up your son as a good father should, he would not have played you this trick.

Argante. Very well. And you have brought up your own son better ?

Geronte. Of course I have. I should be sorry to see him doing anything of the sort.

Argante. And suppose this son of yours that you have reared so well had done something worse again than mine ?

Geronte. What ?

Argante. What ?

Geronte. What are you talking about ?

Argante. I am saying it is a pity to be so ready to run down other peoples doings. And that those who live in glass houses shouldn't throw stones.

Geronte. I don't understand your riddles.

Argante. You will learn to understand them.

Geronte. Is it that you've heard something about my son ?

Argante. Maybe.

Geronte. And what is it I ask you ?

Argante. Your Scapin gave me a hint of it when he saw me so put out. He or someone else can tell you all about it. I give you my compliments for the way you have brought up your son. (*Makes a sweeping bow.*) As for myself, I am going to consult a lawyer to know what I had best do ; I'll be back again.

(*Goes off.*

Geronte. What can he have done ? Worse, he said, than the other. I don't see how it could be worse. I think to marry without your father's consent is about the worst crime that can be committed. (*Leandre comes in.*) Ah, there you are !

Leandre (*running up to embrace Geronte*). Oh, papa, I'm so glad to see you safe at home.

Geronte (*refusing to embrace him*). Gently. Wait till we have had a few words on business.

Leandre. Let me welcome you, and then——.

Geronte (*pushing him back.*) Gently, I say. There is a certain matter must be cleared up between us.

Leandre. What is it ?

Geronte. Let me have a look at you.

Leandre. What ?

Geronte. Look me straight in the face.

Leandre. Well ?

Geronte. What has happened here ?

Leandre. What has happened ?

Geronte. Yes. What have you been doing while I was away ?

Leandre. What did you want me to do ?

Geronte. I am not saying I wanted anything done. I am asking what you have done.

Leandre. I. Nothing for you to complain of.

Geronte. Nothing ?

Leandre. No.

Geronte. You are quite sure ?

Leandre. I am sure I have done nothing wrong.

Geronte. For all that I have heard news of you from Scapin.

Leandre. Scapin ?

Geronte. Ah, ah ! That name makes you start.

Leandre. He has told you something about me ?

Geronte. This is not the proper place to look into it. We'll talk about it elsewhere. Go back to the house. I will be there immediately. (*Going to Leandre, who retreats.*) If you have disgraced me I will give you up altogether, and you may as well leave the country.

(*Goes out.*

Leandre. To betray me like this. A rascal

who ought for every reason to be the last to tell my secrets, to be the first to betray them to my father. By heaven he must not escape without punishment.

(*Octave and Scapin come in.*

Octave. My dear Scapin, what a lot I owe you. What a splendid man you are. Fortune was good sending you to my help.

Leandre (*goes to Scapin.*) Ah, there you are, I am glad to have met you, you rascal.

Scapin. Thank you, sir. You are too kind.

Leandre (*drawing his sword*). You are pretending to play the fool. I'll give you a lesson.

Scapin (*passing to front of Octave, falling on his knees*). Sir!

Octave (*coming between them to keep Leandre from striking Scapin*). Oh, Leandre!

Leandre. No, Octave, don't hold me off.

Scapin (*to Leandre*). Oh, sir.

Octave (*holding Leandre*). I beg you.

Leandre (*wanting to strike Scapin*). Let me get at him!

Octave. In the name of friendship don't touch him.

Scapin. What have I done, sir?

Leandre (*as before*). What have you done, traitor?

(*Scapin falls on his face, groaning.*

Octave (*still holding him back*). Gently now.

Leandre. No, Octave. I must make him confess his treachery to me. Yes, rascal. I know the trick you have played me. I have heard of it. You thought, I suppose, I wouldn't find it out. But I'll have the confession from your own mouth, or I will run this sword through your body.

Scapin (*raising his head*). Oh, sir, you wouldn't have the heart to do it.

Leandre. Own up, then.

Scapin. Have I done anything at all, sir ?

Leandre. You have, and your conscience knows well what it is.

Scapin. I declare I don't know in the world what it is.

Leandre (*advancing to strike him*). You don't know ? (*Scapin falls down.*)

Octave (*holding him*). Leandre !

Scapin (*lifting his head and pretending to weep*). Very well, sir, if you will have it. I confess it was I drank with my friends that little cask of sherry was sent you the other day. It was I made a hole in the cork and wet it round about, the way you'd think the wine had run out.

Leandre. It was you, gaol bird, who drank

my cask of wine, and made me scold the maid, thinking she had taken it?

Scapin. That was so. I ask your pardon for it.

Leandre. I am very glad to have found that out. But that is not the question just now.

Scapin. It was not that, sir?

Leandre. It is something that touches me nearer, and I will make you tell it.

Scapin. I don't remember, sir, doing any other thing.

Leandre (*trying to strike him*). You won't tell?

Scapin (*falls again*). Sir.

Octave (*holding Scapin*). Quiet yourself.

Scapin (*raising head as before*). I will, sir. That day you sent me three weeks ago to bring a little watch to that gipsy of yours, I came back to the house, my clothes covered with mud, my face bloody, and I told you I had met with thieves that had beaten me and taken the watch from me. It was I myself, sir, that kept it.

Leandre. It was you stole my watch?

Scapin. It was, sir, to be able to know what the time was.

Leandre. Well, I am learning a good deal. I have an honest servant, surely; but that is not the story I want.

Scapin (*very astonished*). It's not that ?

Leandre. No, I tell you. It's another thing you have to confess.

Scapin (*aside*). Bad luck to it.

Leandre. Speak up, I'm in a hurry.

Scapin. That is all I ever did.

Leandre (*striking at him*). Is that all ?

Octave (*putting himself before him*). Ay ?

Scapin (*falling down again*). If you will have it. Are you remembering, sir, that wicked ghost you met with six months ago in the night time, that gave you a beating and near made you break your neck falling into a cellar as you ran ?

Leandre. Well ?

Scapin. It was myself, sir, was that ghost.

Leandre. You dressed up to frighten me ? You scoundrel !

Scapin. If I did give you a fright, it was to get you out of that habit you had of wanting me to go out with you in the night.

Leandre. I will remind you at the right time of all you have told me. (*Coming to him.*) But just now what I want you to confess is what you have been telling my father.

Scapin. Telling your father, is it ?

Leandre. Yes, you villain. My father.

Scapin. I give you my word I didn't so much as see him since he came back.

Leandre. You haven't seen him ?

Scapin. I have not.

Leandre. You are sure of that ?

Scapin. He will tell you the same himself.

Leandre. But I heard it from his own lips——

Scapin. Begging your pardon, he's a liar——. He was not telling the truth. (*Carle comes in.*

Carle. I am come with bad news to you, sir.

Leandre (*goes to Carle*). What is that ?

Carle. Your gipsies are on the point of carrying away Zerbinette from you. It is she herself sent me to you, and the tears standing in her eyes. She bade me tell you that if you fail to bring them the money they are asking for her, within two hours she is lost to you for ever.

Leandre. Within two hours ?

Carle. That's it, two hours.

(*Carle goes out; a pause, during which Leandre looks at Octave, who points to Scapin. Scapin is still on his knees.*

Leandre. Oh, my good Scapin, will you give me your help ?

Scapin (*still kneeling*). " Oh, my good Scapin ! " I am " my good Scapin " now that you are in need of me.

Leandre. I will forgive you all that you told me, and worse again if you have it to tell.

Scapin (*rising, and walking up and down, followed by Leandre*). Not at all. Don't forgive me anything. Thrust your sword out through my body, I would be well pleased you to kill me.

Leandre. No, no, you must keep me alive by helping my love affair.

Scapin (*still walking up and down*). Not at all. It's best for you kill me.

Leandre. You are too valuable. I want that cleverness of yours that brings everything to victory.

Scapin. No, no! Make an end of me.

Leandre. Ah, give over thinking of that. Set your mind to helping me, I ask you.

Octave (*stopping Scapin*). Look here, Scapin, you must do something for him.

Scapin. Is it after the insult he put upon me?

Leandre. Now do forget what I said, and come to my help.

Scapin. That insult is preying on my heart.

Octave. You must try to forget it.

Leandre. Would you desert me, Scapin, when I am at my wits end?

Scapin. To have wronged me the way you did without any warning.

Leandre. I was in the wrong, I confess it.

Scapin. Wanting to thrust your sword through my body.

Leandre. I beg your pardon if I did. If you want me to go on my knees I'll do it. (*Kneels.*) Only don't give me up.

Octave. Hang it all, Scapin, you must give in to that. (*Scapin turns his back on Leandre, and wraps his cloak about him. Then turns and looks at Leandre.*) Get up so. But you must not be so hasty another time.

Leandre (*getting up*). You promise to work for me ?

Scapin. I will think about it.

Leandre. But there is no time to lose.

Scapin. Don't be troubling yourself. How much is it you want ?

Leandre. Five hundred crowns.

Scapin. And you ?

Octave. Two hundred pounds.

Scapin. It is from your own two fathers I will draw the money. (*To Octave*) As for yours, I have the machinery settled already. (*To Leandre*) As for your father, though he is the worst miser in the place, I will have less trouble again with him, for the Lord be praised he has no great provision of sense. I take him to be a man you could make believe anything you would choose. Don't be taking offence now,

there's no sort of resemblance at all between himself and yourself. Sure there are many that say he was never your father at all.

Leandre. Drop that, Scapin.

Scapin. Very good, very good. There are some do not like to hear a thing like that. Is it humbugging you are——Hush. I see Octave's father coming towards us. We'll begin with him so as he puts himself forward. Go away the two of you. (*To Octave*) Go tell your Silvester it is time for him to come play his part.

(*Octave passes behind Scapin, and goes out left with Leandre. Argante comes in from right.*

Scapin. Meditating he is.

Argante (*believing himself alone*). To have so little sense and so little behaviour, to run himself into an engagement like this. Ah, ah, the folly of youngsters.

Scapin (*behind Argante*). I beg your pardon, sir.

Argante. Is that you, Scapin ?

Scapin. You are thinking over this business of your son's ?

Argante. I confess it makes me very angry.

Scapin. Life is full of crosses ; it is well to be always prepared for them. There was a thing

I heard said by an old man long ago, I have always kept in my mind.

Argante. What was that ?

Scapin. It is what he used to be saying, that no matter how short the time the father of a family to be leaving home, he should run through in his mind all the misfortunes might meet him at his return. He should lay out to himself he would find his house burned down, his wife buried, his son be-crippled, his daughter on the streets. And none of these things to happen, he should put it to the good luck he has. As for myself, I strive always to exercise myself in this little philosophy, indeed I never come back to the house without expecting to meet with the ill temper of my masters, with scoldings, kickings, hits, raps and cuts. And if all that fails to happen me, I give thanks to my good fortune. (*Makes an elaborate bow with his hat off.*)

Argante. That is right enough. But this silly marriage that upsets the one I wanted him to make is a thing I can't put up with. I have just been consulting my lawyer about breaking it.

Scapin. If you'll mind me, sir, you'll take some other way of settling the business. You know what sort a lawsuit is in this country.

Before long you'll find yourself gripped in a briar bush.

Argante. You are right, I know that well enough. But what else is there to do ?

Scapin (*putting his hat on*). I think I have lit on a plan. I was that sorry seeing your trouble that I went searching my mind for some means to ease you. It's a thing I hate to see—good fathers vexed by their children. And I always had a great wish for yourself, sir.

Argante (*shaking Scapin's hand*). I'm obliged to you.

Scapin. So I went looking for the brother of this girl he's after marrying. He is a bullying sort of chap, one of those that has always his hand upon his sword, that talks of nothing but strokes and slashes, and would think no more of killing a man than of drinking a glass of spirits. I led him to talk of the marriage, I showed him how easy broken it would be on the head of the threats used. I made much of your rights as a father and of the support your means and your friends would get you in the Court. At last I had worked the matter so well that he offered to take it in hand and break the marriage himself in consideration of you giving him a certain sum of money.

Argante. How much did he ask ?

Scapin. Oh, at first, the world and all.

Argante. And then ?

Scapin. Something beyond all bounds.

Argante. But now ?

Scapin. He talks of no less than five or six hundred pounds.

Argante. Five or six hundred pains take hold of him. Is he making a butt of us ?

Scapin. That is what I said to him myself. I wouldn't listen to such a proposal at all. I made him understand well you were no fool, that he would be asking you five or six hundred pounds. At last after a great deal of talk this is what came of our bargaining. (*Scapin puts on a big voice.*) "The time has come" said he, "when I have to go join the army. I'm after buying an outfit, and the need I have of money is the only thing would make me consent to your offer." (*He roars.*) "I have to find a horse for myself," says he, "and I couldn't get one would be any good at all for less than sixty pounds."

Argante. Well, as far as sixty pounds, I consent to that.

Scapin. Saddle and bridle he'll need, and arms. That will mount to twenty pounds more.

Argante. Twenty and sixty, that makes eighty.

Scapin. So it does.

Argante. That is a great deal. But never mind. I'll go as far as that.

Scapin (*still in a loud voice*). "I must have a mount for my servant too," said he, "and that will be thirty pounds more."

Argante. What the deuce! Let him walk. He will get nothing at all.

Scapin. Sir?

Argante. Nothing. Such impudence.

Scapin. Would you wish his man to travel after him walking?

Argante. Let him travel as he likes, and his master with him.

Scapin. Ah, now sir, don't be breaking off for so small a trifle as that. Don't be going to law now. Better to give all than get into the hands of justice.

Argante (*coming to Scapin*). Well, well, I give in, I give in to the extra thirty pounds.

Scapin. "I must have along with that," said he, "a mule to carry the luggage."

Argante. Let him go to the devil with his mule. That is too much. I will go into Court.

Scapin. Oh, if you please, sir.

Argante. I'll give him nothing.

Scapin. A *little* mule, sir.

Argante. I wouldn't give him as much as an ass.

Scapin. Think now.

Argante. I would rather go to law.

Scapin. Ah, sir, what are you saying? What is it you are making up your mind to? Throw your eye on the windings of justice. Look how many appeals there are, and degrees of jurisdiction. Look at all the troublesome proceedings of it, look at all the beasts of prey will be sticking their claws in you. Sergeants, attorneys, King's counsels, registrars, substitutes, reporters, judges and their clerks. There is not one of the whole flock but is ready to upset the best case in the world for the least little thing. A sergeant will issue false writs that will lose you the case before you know it. Your attorney will have an understanding with the other side, and will sell you for gold. Your counsel, bought in the same way, is not to be found when your case comes on, or he will give out arguments that lead to nothing at all. The registrar will be serving sentences and arrests on you. The reporter's clerk will be stealing your papers, or the reporter will give no clear account. And at the last, when with the greatest work in the world you have got through all that, you will wonder to find the

judges set against you by religion or by their wives. If you will mind me you'll keep yourself out of that hell upon earth. To be in a lawsuit is the same as to be in hell before your time. The very thought of such a thing would send me running as far as the blacks of India.

Argante (*to Scapin.*) How much would the mule come to ?

Scapin. He was saying, for the mule, and the horse, and his servant's horse, and the saddle and arms, and some little thing he owed his landlady, he is asking in all two hundred pounds.

Argante (*with a jump*). Two hundred pounds !

Scapin. Just that.

Argante (*furiously, walking up and down*). No, no, we'll have the case tried.

Scapin. Think it over.

Argante. I'll go to law.

Scapin. Don't be throwing yourself——.

Argante. I will go to law.

Scapin. But to try the case, money will be needful, money for the summons, money for the registration, money for the attorney's letters, money for putting in an appearance, for counsel, for the witnesses and the solicitor's time. Along with that you must pay for

consultation, for counsel's pleadings, for getting back your papers, for engrossing the documents. Money you will want for reports, for judges' fees, for the enrolment of the registrar, the form of the decree, sentences, arrests, controls, signatures, and duplicate copies. Add to that all the presents you must make. But give the money to this man, and you are clear of it all.

Argante (*to Scapin*). What are you saying ? Two hundred pounds ?

Scapin. You'll gain by it. I am after doing up a little sum myself of the expenses of the case, and as I bring it out, by giving this man two hundred pounds you will save at the least a hundred and fifty, without reckoning the cares, the troubles, the vexations you will spare yourself. If it was for nothing at all but to be safe from all the impudent things those lawyers will be saying out before the world, I would sooner give three hundred pounds than go into the Courts.

Argante. I don't care for that. I defy the lawyers to say anything against me.

Scapin. Well, you must do as pleases you. But if I was in your place I would keep free of the lawsuit.

Argante. I will not give two hundred pounds.

(*A voice heard off.*

Scapin. Here is now the very man we were talking about.

(*Enter Silvester disguised as a bully.*

Silvester (*speaks in a big voice*). Here, Scapin, let me see this rogue that is Octave's father.

Scapin. Why so, Sir ?

Silvester. I have just heard he is going to take an action against me and to break my sister's marriage.

Scapin. I don't know has he any thought of that. But he won't consent to give the two hundred pounds you are seeking. He says it is too much.

Silvester (*stamping his foot*). By all the holies ! If I get a hold of him, I'll slaughter him if I'm hanged for it.

Scapin. Octave's father is a courageous man, sir, he will not be afraid of you.

Silvester. Ha, ha. By this and by that if I had him I'd spit him on my sword. (*Seeing Argante.*) Who is that fellow ?

Scapin. It isn't him at all, it isn't him.

Silvester. Maybe it's one of his friends.

Scapin. Not at all. So far from that it's his bitter enemy.

Silvester (*jumps in the air and comes down heavily*). His bitter enemy ?

Scapin. That's what I said.

Silvester (*passes before Scapin*). I am well pleased to hear that. (*To Argante, hitting him playfully in the stomach*). You are an enemy to this wretched Argante ?

Scapin. Didn't I tell you he is ?

Silvester (*shaking Argante's hand, roughly*). Shake hands, shake hands. I give you my word, and I swear to you on my honour and on my sword that before the day is out I will have rid you of that scum of the world, that rogue Argante. You may trust my word.

Scapin (*to Silvester*). There are laws against violence in this country.

Silvester. What do I care. I have nothing to lose.

Scapin. He will be on his guard against you. Relations he has, and servants, and friends for his protection.

Silvester. That will suit me well. That is what I ask. (*Draws his sword.*) Blood and thunder ! Why can't I meet him at this minute with all his help ? Why doesn't he come before me, and thirty with him ? Let them come make an attack on me with their swords. (*He jumps in the air, brandishing his sword. Argante and Scapin fall on their faces, Silvester goes up and down, then making passes with his sword in*

every direction). Ha, ha, rascals, you are daring to come at me? Come on now. No quarter (*striking right and left.*) Lay on. Drive home. Eye straight. Foot sure. Ah, you ruffians you. I'll give you what you want. Stand to it. Come on. Have at you——and you——and you, what. You're giving way? Stand your ground, I tell you stand your ground.

Scapin. He, he, he——Oh, sir! we have nothing to do with him.

(*Silvester comes to Scapin and pinches his leg; Scapin gives him his left hand without rising; they shake hands. Argante is going to rise. Silvester hits him on the back with the flat of his sword; he falls down again.*)

Silvester (*wipes his sword on his sleeve*). I'll show what it is to dare play with me.

(*Goes out.*

(*Argante and Scapin rise slowly to their knees, face to face.*)

Scapin. All right. You see how many people will be killed for the sake of two hundred pounds. That'll do. I wish you good luck.

Argante (*trembling*). Scapin.

Scapin. What is it?

Argante. I have decided to give him the two hundred pounds.

Scapin. I'm glad to hear it for your own sake.

Argante (*standing up*). Let us go after him. I have them in my pocket.

Scapin. You have but to give them to me. Sure you wouldn't like to go before him after passing yourself off here as some other person ? And I'm in dread that knowing you, he would ask for more money again.

Argante. Yes, but I should have liked to see him get the money.

Scapin. Is it that you are mistrusting me ?

Argante. Oh, no——but——.

Scapin. Look here now, I am a rogue or I am an honest man, one or the other I am. Is it that I'm wanting to deceive you ? Have I any interest outside yourself and my master ? If it is suspecting me you are I will meddle no more, and you can find some other one to settle your business. (*Walks away from him.*)

Argante (*following Scapin*). Take it then.

Scapin. No, don't be trusting me with your money at all. I would be well pleased you to make use of some other one.

Argante. Oh, take it, take it.

Scapin. No, I tell you, don't be trusting me at all. How do you know but I might be wanting to make off with your money ?

Argante (*giving purse*). Take it, I say. That's

enough of arguing. But mind you get a receipt from him.

Scapin. Leave me alone. It is no fool he has to deal with.

Argante. I will go and wait for you in the house.

Scapin. I won't fail you there. (*Argante goes out.*) One bird caught. I have but to look for the other. (*Looks out of door*). Well, if he isn't coming this way! It's like as if heaven itself was sending them one by one into my net.

(*Geronte comes in. Scapin* (*running about stage, pretending not to see Geronte*). What'll he do——What'll he do ? Ah, the poor father. Oh, poor Geronte. What'll he do at all at all.

Geronte (*aside*). What is he saying about me ? Something must have happened.

Scapin. Can anyone tell me where at all is Mr. Geronte ?

Geronte. What is it, Scapin ?

Scapin (*running here and there*). Where can I find him to tell him this great misfortune?

Geronte. Tell me what is the matter ?

Scapin. I am running there and hither looking for him.

Geronte. Here I am.

Scapin. He must be hid in some place no one would think of.

Geronte (*stopping him*). Here, are you blind that you don't see me ?

Scapin. Oh, sir, it is hard indeed to meet with you.

Geronte. I have been here before you for the last hour. What is all this about ?

Scapin. Oh, sir.

Geronte. What is it ?

Scapin. Your son, sir.

Geronte. Well, my son ?

Scapin. The queerest misfortune in the world has happened him.

Geronte. What is that ?

Scapin. I found him a while ago greatly put out at something you said to him, and that you had a right not to have mixed my name in at all. I brought him walking down by the docks striving to take the load off his mind. Looking we were at one thing and another, and we cast our eyes on a Turkish galley——a grand one it was——and a very nice-looking young Turk invited us to go on board, and to see it nearer. We did that, and he gave us the best of good treatment—fruit of all sorts and wine the best in the world.

Geronte. I see no cause for complaint in all that.

Scapin (*coming to Geronte*). Wait a while, we are coming to it. While we were eating and drinking it's what he did——he got out the galley to sea. When we were clear of the harbour he put me out in a boat and sent me back with a message that if you do not send him by my hand five hundred crowns he will carry off your son to Algiers.

Geronte. What the mischief. Five hundred crowns!

Scapin. Five hundred. And what is worse he has given me but two hours to get them.

Geronte. Oh, the robber. To destroy me like this!

Scapin. Let you make your mind up now what way will you save your darling son from slavery.

Geronte. But what the devil brought him into that galley?

Scapin. He never thought of what would happen.

Geronte (*coming to Scapin*). Go and tell this Turk I will bring him to justice.

Scapin. In the open sea. Is it making a fool of me you are?

Geronte. What the devil did he want going into that galley?

Scapin. It is often some bad chance will lead a man astray.

Geronte. Scapin, you must do now what a faithful servant should do.

Scapin. What is that, now ?

Geronte. Go and tell this Turk that he must send back my son, and that he may keep you in place of him until I have gathered the ransom he wants.

Scapin. Ah, what are you talking about. Do you think the Turk has so little sense as to take a poor creature like myself in the place of a gentleman like your son ?

Geronte (*going a little to left*). What the devil brought him into that galley ?

Scapin. Sure he never guessed what would happen. Think now I was given but two hours——.

Geronte (*coming to Scapin*). You say he is asking——.

Scapin. Five hundred crowns.

Geronte. Five hundred crowns. Has he no conscience ?

Scapin. He has indeed, the conscience of a Turk.

Geronte. Does he know what five hundred crowns means ?

Scapin. He does, he knows they are a hundred and twenty-five pounds.

Geronte. Does he think a hundred and twenty-five pounds are to be picked up on the ground ?

Scapin. There are people that don't understand reasons.

Geronte. But what the devil did he want going into that galley ?

Scapin. That is true, but it's hard to foresee all. Hurry on, sir, if you please.

Geronte. Well, well here's the key of my press.

Scapin. All right.

Geronte. You can open it.

Scapin. I will do that.

Geronte. You will find a large key on the left side, the key of my lumber room.

Scapin. Right.

Geronte. You will take all the clothes you will find in the big hamper there, and sell them to a dealer to redeem my son.

Scapin. Are you dreaming? (*Geronte is about to go, but Scapin catches him, and gives him back key*). I wouldn't get a hundred francs for all that's in it. Besides that you know how little time I have been given.

Geronte. What the devil brought him into that galley ?

Scapin. Ah, what a lot of words to be spending. Have done talking of that galley and remember that time is passing, and you in danger of losing your son. (*Rocks himself, wringing his hands*). My grief, my poor master. It is likely I will never see you again, maybe at this minute they are bringing you away as a slave to Algiers. But the Lord knows I have done all I could for you. If you fail of being ransomed all you have to lay the blame on is the unkindness of your own father.

Geronte (*going towards door*). Wait, Scapin, I will go and look for the money.

Scapin. Hurry on, then, I'm in dread of the hour going by.

Geronte (*coming back to Scapin*). Isn't it four hundred crowns you said ?

Scapin. No, but five hundred.

Geronte. Five hundred crowns.

Scapin. You have it now.

Geronte. What the devil brought him into that galley ?

Scapin. What indeed. But hurry on.

Geronte. Was there no other place to take a walk in ?

Scapin. There might be——but don't delay.

Geronte. That accursed galley.

Scapin. That galley is sticking in his gizzard.

Geronte (*taking purse from pocket*). Here, Scapin, I have just remembered, I had received a little while ago the very sum in gold, but I never thought it would be swept away from me so soon. (*Holds out purse.*) Take it and ransom my son.

Scapin. I will, sir.

Geronte (*still keeping purse*). But tell this Turk he is a villain.

Scapin (*holding out hand*). So I will.

Geronte. A wretch.

Scapin. I will.

Geronte. A traitor. A thief.

Scapin. Let me alone.

Geronte. That he is dragging this money out of me against all right.

Scapin. I'll tell him that.

Geronte. That I don't give it of my own free will.

Scapin. All right.

Geronte. That if ever I take him I'll make him pay for it.

Scapin. That's it.

Geronte. (*Putting purse in his pocket and going out*). Go at once and bring back my son.

Scapin. Hallo, hallo.

Geronte. What is it ?

Scapin. Where's the money ?

Geronte (*coming back to Scapin*). Didn't I give it to you ?

Scapin. Not at all. You put it in your pocket.

Geronte. Ah, it is the grief that has confused my mind. (*Searching his left pocket.*)

Scapin. No, the other. (*Pointing to his right pocket.*)

Geronte (*giving purse*). What the devil did he want in that galley. My curse upon that galley. The devil take that robber of a Turk!

(*He goes out.*

Scapin (*at back*). He can't get over this, that I have got it out of him. But I have not done with him. I'll make him pay in some other coin for the way he slandered me to my master.

(*Octave and Leandre come in.*

Octave (*coming to Scapin, right side*). Well, Scapin, what success for me have you had ?

Leandre (*coming to Scapin, left side*). Have you done anything to help my case ?

Scapin (*to Octave*). Here are two hundred pounds I have got out of your father.

Octave. Oh, that is splendid.

Scapin (*to Leandre*). I was able to do nothing for you.

Leandre (*turning to go*). Then I have nothing to do but to die. I have nothing to live for if Zerbinette is taken away from me.

Scapin. Wait a minute. What a hurry you are in.

Leandre (*coming back*). What is there for me to do here ?

Scapin. Here now. I have got what you want.

Leandre. Ah, you have brought me back to life.

Scapin. But I make one condition. You must give me leave to take some little vengeance on your father for the trick he played on me.

Leandre. Do it, and welcome.

Scapin. You give me that leave before a witness ?

Leandre. Yes, of course.

Scapin. Here then are your five hundred crowns.

Leandre. Now let's be off and make sure of Zerbinette.

ACT III.

(*Enter Zerbinette and Hyacinth, holding hands, followed by Scapin and Silvester.*

Silvester. It is what our masters have settled that the two of you should be put to keep one another company. We have obeyed now the order they gave us.

Hyacinth. That is an order that pleases me very well. I hope Zerbinette, the friendship between my Octave and your Leandre will lead to a friendship between you and me ?

Zerbinette. I hope so indeed. I never refuse a chance of friendship.

Scapin. And have you the same welcome now for love ?

Zerbinette. Ah, that's another thing. That's not quite so safe. Tell us now, Scapin, the story of how you got the money out of your old miser. You know telling a story to me is not lost time. I love a good story.

Scapin. Here is Silvester—he will tell it better than myself. I have a little revenge to go do now, that I am well pleased to think of.

Silvester. I think you are cracked running yourself into risks of the sort.

Scapin. I like well to be playing an odd game that has some taste of danger in it.

Silvester. If you'd mind me you'd give up that game you have in hand.

Scapin. I would, but it's myself I mind.

Silvester. What the mischief do you want with tricks of the kind ?

Scapin. What the mischief are you bothering about ?

Silvester. I see you are going to bring down a rod on your back when there is no need for it.

Scapin. If I am it's on my own back it'll fall and not on yours.

Silvester. To be sure you are master of your own skin, do what you like with it so.

(*Goes out.*

Scapin. It's not a fear of that sort would ever stop me. I hate those sort of timorous persons that will never go into anything fearing some harm might come of it.

Zerbinette. But, Scapin, we have not done with you yet.

Scapin. I'll be back with you immediately.

(*They go into the house followed by Silvester.*

Scapin. It must never be said that I let myself be slandered, accused of betraying my

master's secret, and that slanderer got off free. He will not get off free. I'm the one that will punish him. (*Goes to right, and puts down his sack and stick.*

(*Geronte enters left.*

Geronte (*crosses to Scapin*). Well, Scapin, what about my son ?

Scapin. He is safe enough, sir. But it is you yourself is in the greatest danger. I would give all I have in the world you to be safe in your own house.

Geronte. What is it ?

Scapin. At this very minute there are some searching for you in every place to make an end of you.

Geronte. Of me ?

Scapin. Of yourself.

Geronte. But who are they ?

Scapin. The brother of that girl Octave has married it is. He thinks it is by reason of you wanting your daughter put in his sister's place that the marriage is to be broke. It is on you his anger has fallen, and he is calling out that he will have your life. All his friends, terrible men like himself, are tracking you up and down and asking news of you, questioning every person they meet. I saw them myself setting a picket on every path leading to your house,

the way you can't go home or take a step right or left without falling into their hands.

Geronte. Oh, my poor Scapin, what can I do ?

Scapin. That is what I don't know. —it is a very unlooked for thing to have happened. It is trembling I am from head to foot——Wait a minute. (*Gives a cry and runs to right.*)

Geronte (*trembling*). Ah !

Scapin (*comes back*). No, no, it's nothing.

Geronte. Can't you think of some way of saving me from this danger ?

Scapin. There is a way I thought of, but I'd be in danger myself of getting my brains knocked out.

Geronte. Oh, Scapin, that's no matter, show me what a faithful servant you can be. Don't forsake me.

Scapin. Well, I'm willing to try it. I have such a great leaning to you, I'd be loth to leave you without help.

Geronte. You will get a good reward I promise you, I'll give you this coat when I have had a little more wear out of it.

Scapin. Wait now, this is what I'm thinking is the handiest way to save you. First of all you have got to get into this sack. (*Brings sack over.*)

Geronte (*thinking he sees someone*). Ah !

Scapin. No, no, no, no, it's no one at all. I tell you, you must get into it, and you must keep yourself from stirring. I will put you up on my back like a sack of——anything at all, till I'll carry you through your enemies as far as your house. Once there we can barricade ourselves and send looking for help.

(*Geronte has been getting into the sack during Scapin's speech.*)

Geronte. That is not a bad plan.

Scapin. It is the best in the world. Wait till you see. (*Aside*) I'll make you pay for that defamation of character !

Geronte. Eh ?

Scapin. I was saying your enemies will be well tricked. Get down well into the bottom, and be sure above all not to show yourself, or to make a stir whatever may happen. (*Closes sack over Geronte.*)

Geronte. Let me alone, I know how to mind myself.

Scapin. Hide, hide, here comes a bully of them in search of you. (*Takes hold of stick, changing his voice.*) " What's that. Amn't I to get a chance of killing that Geronte ? Is there no one for charity's sake will tell me where to find him ? " (*To Geronte in his usual voice*) Don't show yourself. (*As before*)

" By gob, I'll find him if he is hiding in the depths of the earth. Here, you fellow with the sack.——" Sir ?——" I'll give you a guinea if you will tell me where this Geronte can be." You are looking for that gentleman ? " Believe me I am "——And for what, sir ?——" For what ?——" Yes, sir——" For to thrash him well with this thorn stick." Oh, sir, you wouldn't strike a gentleman of that sort. It isn't for a man of his sort to be treated that way. " Who, that cur of a Geronte ? That knave, that ruffian, that rascal——" He is not a knave, sir, or a rascal, or a ruffian, and you should not, if you please, be speaking that way. " Is it impudence you are giving me ? " I am but defending as I should, an honourable gentleman that is abused——" You are, maybe, one of his friends ?——" I am, sir——" You are, are you ? " That's right. (*Striking the sack several times*) " There I give you that for him " (*Crying out as if the blows were falling on him*) Ah, ah, ah, sir. Oh, sir, gently. That's enough. Oh, oh, oh. " Be off. Give him that from me." Oh, the devil take the Northerner, oh !

(*Scapin moves away and throws down stick.*

Geronte (*putting his head out of sack*). Oh, Scapin, I can't bear any more.

Scapin. Oh, I'm pounded to death. My shoulders are destroyed.

Geronte. How is that? It was my back the blows fell on.

Scapin. Not at all, sir, it was my own.

Geronte. What do you mean? I felt the blows, and I feel them still.

Scapin. I tell you it was but the end of the stick that reached you.

Geronte. You should have moved a little further off to have spared me.

Scapin (*pushing his head into the sack*). Take care——here is some other one coming that has the look of a stranger——(*Changes voice*). "Look at me running through the day like a greyhound, and not able to find that rat of a Geronte." Hide yourself well——"Tell me now if you please do you know where is this Geronte we are looking for?"——I do not, sir. I know nothing of him——"Tell me if you can. I have no great cruelty to show him, just a dozen or so strokes of my cane and three or four prods of my sword?——Indeed, sir, I don't know where he is——"I think I see something moving in the sack"——Not at all, sir——"There is something going on"——Not at all, sir——"I have a mind to run my sword through that sack"——Oh, sir, don't

do that——" Show me then what is in it "——Gently, sir——" Why gently ? "——It's no business of yours what I have in it——" I say I will look "——You will not look——" Stuff and nonsense "——There are clothes that belong to myself——" Show them to me I say "——I will not——" You won't ? "——No——" Then you'll feel my stick on your back "——I don't care——" Ah, you don't care, don't you ? " (*Hitting sack*). Ah, ah, ah, oh, sir, oh, oh, oh——" Good-bye to you now, that's just a little lesson to teach you manners "——a bad end to the blackguard. Oh !——

Geronte (*putting his head out of sack*). Oh, I'm destroyed.

Scapin. Oh, I'm killed altogether.

Geronte. Why the deuce should they assault me ?

Scapin (*pushing his head into sack*). Have a care. Here are half a dozen of them all together (*Mimicking the voices of several people.*) " Come along——we must make out this Geronte, we must seek him out. Don't spare yourselves. Ransack the town. Forget no corner. Try every hole. Rummage on every side. Where will we go ? Turn this way——no, but that way——to the left, to the

right "——Hide yourself well——" Ah, cowards, look at his servant. Ha, rascal, we'll teach you who is your master." (*Scapin falls on his knees, with his back to Geronte.*) Oh, gentlemen, don't be ill-treating me—— "Come on tell us where he is. Speak up, no delay." Don't show yourself. (*Geronte puts his head out of the sack and perceives Scapin's trick.*) "If we don't find your master at once it's a hail storm of blows will be falling on you "—— I would suffer all sooner than betray my master——"We'll knock your brains out "——Do as pleases you——"It's a thrashing you want, here is a taste of it." (*He turns to strike sack, sees Geronte, and flies out right, throws stick in the air.*)

Geronte (*throwing sack after Scapin*). You scoundrel. You hound. You villain. This is the way you are bringing me to my death.

(*Zerbinette comes in, laughing, doesn't see Geronte.*)

Zerbinette. Ha, ha, ha. What a joke. What a silly old man.

Geronte (*coming forward*). There is nothing at all amusing in it for you to laugh at.

Zerbinette. What, what are you saying, sir?

Geronte. I say you have no business to laugh at me.

Zerbinette. At you ?

Geronte. Yes.

Zerbiuette. But who thought of laughing at you ?

Geronte. Why, you are, laughing at me to my face.

Zerbinette. I wasn't laughing at you, I was laughing at a story I have just been told, the funniest I have ever heard. Perhaps it's because I'm concerned in it myself, but I never in my life heard anything so funny as a trick played on a father by his son to get money out of him.

Geronte. A trick played on a father to get money out of him ?

Zerbinette. Yes. I'll tell it to you if you like. I'm dying to tell it to someone.

Geronte. Tell it to me if you please.

Zerbinete. I will——it doesn't matter for it can't be long hidden anyhow——I must tell you that I had been carried from place to place by a troop of gipsies, and a young gentleman of this town saw me and fell in love with me, and wanted to marry me. But the gipsies wouldn't give up without a sum of money, and he has none. His father though has plenty, but he is a dreadful miser, the stingiest wretch in the world——Wait, I can't think of his

name——can you help me ? Tell me the name of someone who is well known here as the most niggardly person in the town ?

Geronte. I don't know him.

Zerbinette. There is a ron in his name——ron——ronte——Oronte ? No. G——Geronte. That's it, that's the old wretch. I have him, that's the miser I'm telling of. Well, my gipsies were going to carry me off from this, but for the cleverness of a servant he has, I know his name well, Scapin—a wonderful man. He deserves all the praise we can give him.

Geronte. The scoundrel !

Zerbinette. Here is the trick he played, ha, ha, ha——I can't think of it without laughing myself sick. He went to this dreadful old man and told him that in walking on the quays with his son —— He, he ! —— They had seen a Turkish galley——had been invited on board——that a young Turk had entertained them——ha, ha, ha——That while they were eating, the galley had put out to sea, and that the Turk had sent him back alone in a boat with a threat to the father that if he didn't send five hundred crowns within an hour his son would be a slave in Algiers. Ha, ha, ha ! You may fancy the old niggard torn in two

between his feeling for his son and his stinginess. The five hundred crowns he asked were like five hundred stabs of a dagger to him, ha, ha, ha! He couldn't make up his mind to disgorge such a sum, and he kept thinking of a hundred other ways of getting back his son, ha, ha, ha! He wanted to serve a writ on the Turk in his galley. He wanted Scapin to be made a slave in his son's place——he wanted him to go and sell a few suits of old clothes to make up the ransom——ha, ha, ha——And every time Scapin told him he must send the full sum he made a lament: "But what the devil brought him into that galley" —— But my story doesn't seem to amuse you. What do you think of it?

Geronte. I think that the young man is a rascal, an insolent puppy, who will be well punished by his father for the trick he played him. As to the gipsy, she is an ill-bred piece of impudence to tell such things to an honourable man who will teach her to come here leading gentlemen's sons astray. I say Scapin is a criminal who shall be sent to the gallows by me myself before morning. (*Goes out.*

Silvester (*coming in*). Who is that running away from you? Do you know that you have been talking to Leandre's father?

Zerbinette. So it seems. Only think I had been telling him his own story.

Silvester. His own story ?

Zerbinette. Yes, I was so full of it I was dying to tell it to someone. What does it matter ? So much the worse for him. I don't see it will make things either better or worse for us.

Silvester. You were in a great hurry to go chattering. People that cannot keep in their own affairs have too long a tongue.

Zerbinette. Oh, he would have heard it from someone else.

Argante (*heard in the distance*). Hallo, Silvester.

Silvester (*to Zerbinette*). Go back into the house, here is my master calling me.

(*She goes into house ; Silvester goes to meet Argante, who threatens him with his stick.*

Argante. You have put your minds together to cheat me, you and Scapin and my son. You have joined to rob me and you think I will put up with it ?

Silvester (*falls on his knees*). Ah, sir, if Scapin has wronged you I have done with him. I will have nothing more to do with it at all.

Argante. We'll see into this, you good-for-

nothing, we'll see into this, I am not a man to let myself be cheated.

Geronte (*coming in as Silvester rises*). Ah, my friend——

Argante. You see me overwhelmed with misfortunes.

Geronte. And you see me in the same way. (*Silvester goes behind them and picks up Scapin's stick*.) That gaol-bird, Scapin, has got five hundred crowns out of me by his roguery.

Argante. That same gaol-bird, Scapin, has robbed me of two hundred pounds.

Geronte. He was not content with plundering me, he has treated me in a way I am really ashamed to tell you. But he'll pay for it.

Argante. I'll make him pay too for the trick he played me.

Geronte. I'll make an example of him.

Silvester (*aside*). I hope I won't be made another example of.

Geronte. But that's not all, and one misfortune is followed by another. I was looking forward to-day to seeing my daughter, all my hopes of happiness were in her. But I have just got word she left Tarentum a long while ago, and it is believed she was lost with the ship.

Argante. And why did you leave her all her life at Tarentum ?

Geronte. I had to keep my second marriage a secret till now——But who is that I see? (*Enter Nerine.*) Is that you, nurse?

Nerine. Ah, Signor Pandolfe.

Geronte. Call me Geronte, don't use that name any more. I have no reason now for hiding my name as I did at Tarentum.

Nerine. Oh, and all the trials and troubles we were put to through that wrong name, trying to find you here.

Geronte. Where are my daughter and her mother?

Nerine. Your daughter is not far off, sir, but before you see her I ask your forgiveness for letting her get married. It was because of the state we were in and not being able to find you.

Geronte. My daughter married?

Nerine. Yes, sir.

Geronte. And to whom?

Nerine. A young gentleman called Octave, son of a certain Argante.

Geronte. Good heavens!

Argante. What a chance.

Geronte. Take me to her at once, at once.

Nerine. You have only to go into this house.

Geronte. Go on. Follow me, follow me, Argante. (*They go into the house.*)

Silvester. That now is a very strange thing to have happened.

Scapin (*coming in*). Well, Silvester, what are our people doing ?

Silvester (*giving him stick*). I have two bits of news for you. The first is, Octave's business is settled. Who does this Hyacinth turn out to be but old Geronte's daughter. Chance has done what the fathers were working for. The other is that the two fathers are making terrible threats against you, more especially Geronte.

Scapin. That's nothing. Threats do no great injury. Clouds above in the sky they are.

Silvester. You'd best mind yourself. The sons will make up with their fathers, and you yourself will be left out in the cold.

Scapin. Leave me alone, I'll find some way to take the sting out of them.

Silvester. Quit this, they are coming out.

(*Scapin runs out. Enter Geronte, Argante, Hyacinth, Zerbinette, Nerine.*

Geronte. Come, my girl, come home with me. I should have nothing left to wish for if your poor mother were but with you.

Argante (*looks out and sees Octave*). Here is Octave in the nick of time. (*Octave comes in.*) Come, my son, till we congratulate you on the happy prospect of your marriage.

Octave. No, father, all your proposals of marrying me go for nothing. I won't deceive you. You have been told of my engagement?

Argante. Yes, but you don't know——

Octave. I know all I need know.

Argante. I tell you Geronte's daughter——

Octave. Geronte's daughter will never be anything to me.

Geronte. It is she——

Octave. No, you must excuse me, I have made up my mind.

Silvester (*to Octave*). Listen.

Octave. Hold your tongue, I will listen to nothing.

Argante. Your wife——

Octave. No, I tell you. I would rather die than give up my sweet Hyacinth. (*Comes over and stands beside her.*) It's no use. My faith is pledged to her, I will love her all my life and I don't want any other woman.

Argante. Well, we are giving her to you. What an obstinate chap he is, sticking to his own way.

Hyacinth (*pointing to Geronte*). Yes, Octave, that is my father. I have found him. No more troubles now.

Geronte. Come to my house, we can settle

things better over there. (*Leandre comes in from R.*)

Hyacinth (*pointing to Zerbinette*). Oh, father, please don't separate me from that dear girl, I know you will take a liking to her when you know her.

Geronte. Would you have me bring home the girl your brother is in love with, and that told me just now to my face, all the spiteful things that are said against me ?

Zerbinette. Please forgive me, sir. I would never have spoken like that had I known it was you——and I only knew you by report.

Geronte. What, by report ?

Hyacinth. My brother is set on marrying her, and she is a very good girl.

Geronte. This is too much. Wanting me to marry my son to a girl no one knows, that goes about as a stroller.

Leandre (*coming in between Argante and Geronte*). Don't say now that I am marrying a girl of no birth. The people I bought her from have just told me she belongs to this town and to a good family. They stole her away when she was four years old. They have given me this bracelet to help to identify her.

Argante (*takes bracelet*). Heavens ! If this is

her bracelet, she is the daughter I lost at that age.

Geronte. Your daughter ?

Argante. Yes, yes, and I see a likeness in her that makes me sure of it. Oh, my dear daughter.

(*Zerbinette goes to him throws herself into his arms.*

Hyacinth. What wonderful things are happening.

Carle (*comes in*). Oh, gentlemen, there has been a terrible accident.

Geronte. Anyone hurt ?

Carle. That poor Scapin !

Geronte. That rascal I want to see hanged.

Carle. Oh, sir, you needn't go to that trouble. It is passing by a new building he was, and the stone-cutters hammer chanced to fall upon his head and shattered it. Dying he is, and all he asked was to be brought back here to speak with you before his death meets him.

(*Scapin is carried in, his head bandaged.*

Scapin. Ah, ah, ah——Oh, gentlemen, you see the way I am, you see me indeed in a very strange case, ah——I was loth to die before I would come to ask pardon of all I might have wronged in any way. And above all of their honours Mr. Argante and Mr. Geronte. Ah, ah——

Argante. As for me, I forgive you, go die in peace.

Scapin (*to Geronte*). It is you, sir, I offended the most with those blows that——

Geronte. Say no more. I also forgive you.

Scapin. It was very bold of me giving those blows——

Geronte. Leave talking of that.

Scapin. It breaks my heart, and I dying, to think of those blows——

Geronte. Will you hold your tongue.

Scapin. Those unlucky blows that I gave——

Geronte. Be quiet, I forgot all about them.

Scapin. Oh, what great goodness. But are you in earnest saying you will forgive me those blows ?

Geronte. Oh, yes, no more about it, I forgive all. That is done with.

Scapin. That word now is the greatest comfort to me.

(*He snatches bandage off his head and waves it in the air.*

Geronte. But I only forgive you on condition that you die.

Scapin. What is that, sir ?

Geronte. I take back my pardon if you recover.

Scapin (*putting bandage on his head again*).

Oh, oh! Look at my weakness that is coming on me again.

Argante. I think, Geronte, you ought to forgive him without any conditions in honour of our own good luck.

Geronte. Well, I will if you wish it.

Argante. Come, we'll have supper together to celebrate this happy day.

Scapin. Let you carry me to the lower end of the table while I am waiting for my death!

NOTES

Extract from an Address on Molière in the Abbey Theatre, on March 11th, 1909, by PROFESSOR MAURICE A. GEROTHWOHL, *Litt.D., Professor of the Romance Languages in Dublin University.*

I AM frequently asked, in my unfortunate capacity as a *professional* critic of French literature, whether these semi-Irish adaptations of Molière do not strike me as being in a literary sense somewhat blasphemous ? This question I answer most unhesitatingly in the negative—for I see no reason why the main scenes and business of " The Miser," for instance, which we find already in Roman garb in Plautus ; then, again, in Italian garb, in Lorenzino de Medici or Ariosto—just as the main scenes and business of the " Rogueries," which are first to be found in Roman garb in Terence's " Phormio," supplemented by a few Italian additions in a farce called " Partalone "—father of a family—should not find a congenial setting in Galway County, or, why not ? in some Dublin metropolitan " Suburban Groove " ! In fact you will notice that if I have any fault to find with Lady Gregory's spirited versions

it is that they are not altogether and avowedly Irish, Irish, in mode of speech, costume and locality. I include speech, for Molière's peasants and servants in particular, speak not academic French, but the dialects of their respective provinces. At the same time I do not mean to say that every play of Molière's could be treated in that way—some of his literary and greatest masterpieces could not, because they are mainly comedies of manners, I mean satires on some of the fads and peculiarities of the French men and French women of his age, and of them alone. Such would be "" The Misanthropist," or " The learned Ladies." But in plays, such as " The Miser," or " The Rogueries," both the plots and characterisation are so universal, alike in their conception and moral application, that no change of scenery or idiom would impair them, as I think, in the slightest degree. At the same time, you will not grudge Mr. Yeats his artistic scrupulousness in reviving for your benefit the traditional business inherited *direct* from Molière through an uninterrupted chain of great comedians, his successors in the foremost theatre of France—nor the glowing colours of that rascal Scapin's Italian jacket and stockings.

And—in speaking of this traditional business—I come to a second objection, this time affecting Molière himself—rather than the Abbey directors. I am told that some of you find the Molièresque

antics and frolics a trifle worn, hackneyed in other words. Well, personally, I should not have thought so, as I listened to the echo of your laughter awakened by " The Miser " in this same house the other night. However, our modernist sticklers are not altogether wrong; the business is old, arch old—it dates from Molière, and we have had many hundreds of dramatists—and thousands of would-be dramatists—(even in Ireland !), who have remembered it—Sheridan, among others, to quote not the least distinguished of them. But I will go one better: the business, the plays themselves, in plot and puns, are much older than Molière. We saw he borrowed from the Romans, who in turn had borrowed from the Greek mimics. —— I had better stop *there*. No, joking apart, Molière's plays—those at least which you have witnessed here—cannot claim absolute nor even considerable originality for their subject matter—even though I leave behind me in T. C. D. Molière's classical reminiscences—or plagiarisms, if you will (modern copyright law would not cover this misdeed). In Molière's farcical comedies we find but a blend of the old stock-in-trade of the French and Italian mediæval farce. The genius consists precisely in making the dry bones live in modern eyes, and this Molière accomplishes by dint of his dramatic *verve* and broad characterisation—or, if you like, by moulding into a complete and artistic whole—generally

around one main character expressing some universal vice of weakness—the scattered and popular traits and episodes.

These episodes, as in "Scapin," are alternately of either French or Italian origin, both closely related to mediæval folklore. The scene of the sack, for example, which drew upon Molière the wrath of his friend, but severe critic, Boileau (some of you will remember Boileau was a very sour and purist critic) who could not understand how the author of that super-refined comedy, the "Misanthropist" could descend to such clowning as "Scapin's" (as if a glass of green chartreuse should prevent one enjoying Guinness XX), the scene of the sack was suggested to Molière by a farce which the strolling player, Tabarin—who acted it in the open air opposite the Place Dauphine, Paris. In the Tabarin version the traditional miser, Lucas, takes the place of the swash-buckler—another traditional type—Captain Rodomant, and gets well beaten for his trouble by his servant Tabarin and daughter Isabella. But note the delight-ful "character" addition introduced by Molière. His "Scapin"—than whom there never was a more surely dammed liar—thrashes poor old Geronte for having told a very mild little fib against him!

To revert to "Scapin" himself, Molière has borrowed this type from the Italian commedia del'arte—or mask comedy. For in the Italian and

mediæval Renaissance comedies, the leading characters wore masks, and the actors bore the names attached to their respective masks, "Scapin," as the traditional valet, living by his wits, and, as often, by his master's stupidity—the arrant cheat, but such a good fellow to his friends, to lovers in particular. Molière, in his earlier stage days, borrowed the Italian masks, as he found them, just added a few more of French origin, such as "Gros-Renè" or "Jodelet," then gradually altered the Italian masks into French ones (Mascarille, in "The Precieuses," shows the transition period)—and finally, when he thought he had sufficiently immortalised the deeply-furrowed features of his characters, exchanged their works for the more subtle and expressive grin of his new comedians.

In concluding, may I express my deep personal gratification at finding myself associated—if in a somewhat unimportant and detached manner—with the work of the Abbey Theatre? Some ten years since, I was similarly associated, in a minor capacity, with the rise of the modern French *social* drama—and I still look back with pride upon that period of riotous yet pregnant enthusiasm—for we were fighting for two noble causes, for Art and a thinking democracy. The Abbey Theatre, under Mr. Yeats' lead, is fighting for these also, but they are fighting for a yet nobler cause, the dramatic expression of a great and exquisite national soul.

A Note by W. B. Yeats *in the "Abbey Theatre Programme," Feb.* 25, 1909.

When we decided to play Molière, we read, and, in some cases, tried in rehearsal, many translations, old and new, and did not find one that had vivid dramatic speech. All, except one or two that used a little Somersetshire dialect, were in ordinary classic English, which is the worst English for plays where often the most dramatic characters speak in dialect, or in bad grammar, or use many provincial words. We had to make our own translations, and we selected such plays as enabled us to use always some Irish dialect, a great deal for the servants and country men, but no more for well-to-do men and young lovers than one could put into the mouth of an Irish country gentleman of a few years ago. This permits our players to found their characterisation more directly upon life than would otherwise be possible, and gives us something to make up for the loss of that traditional way of playing Molière which French actors inherit from his time, and can alone succeed in. This traditional way, which is at once distinguished, and, so far as the comedies we have chosen go, more farcical

than ours, has, for all its historical and artistic interest, the disadvantage of putting the characters, so different are manners to-day, almost as far from the life of to-day as the clown and pantaloon of the circus. Even in Paris an actor has here and there advocated the abandonment of tradition, that Mascarille, let us say, might be re-made nearer to modern life; but, as it is impossible to modernise the words, tradition is, no doubt, essential in Paris. The word translation, however, which should be applied to scenery, acting, and words alike, implies, or should imply, freedom. In vital translation, and I believe that our translations are vital, a work of art does not go upon its travels; it is re-born in a strange land.

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The movements and business, as, unlike the words, these are as true of one nationality as another, are sent to us by the Comedie Française.